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ABSTRACT

Presenting proceedings from the Tenth International Conference on Education in Sparsely Populated Areas ("Interskola 77"), this conference report includes a list of participants and their addresses and the following speeches: (1) "The Council of Europe"; (2) "East Anglia: An Introduction"; (3) "Perceptions of Teachers' In-Service Education Needs in Rural Areas"; (4) "Meeting Teachers In-Service Needs in Rural Areas"; (5) "Implementing Open Approaches in the School"; (6) "The Village Community School: The Village College"; (7) "The Village Community School"; (8) "The Western Isles Community Education Project"; (9) "The Future of the Village School"; (10) "The Lofoten Project"; (11) "Towards a Relevant Education". The theme of Interskola '77 is identified as "Innovation and Rural Education". While the papers contained in this report range over a variety of concerns such as in-service provision and curriculum and school organization in sparsely populated areas, there is in all the papers an underlying awareness of the need to develop greater insights into the rural school's relationship with its community so that it can become an integrated and educative agency for both its pupils and those whose lives fill and form the rural community. Conference participants are identified as representing the following countries: England, Finland, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, U.S.A., Uganda, and Wales. (JC)

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INTERSKOLA 77

TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

INNOVATION AND RURAL EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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Keswick Hall College
Norfolk · England · · July

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INTERSKOLA '77

Tenth International Conference on Rural Education

Keswick Hall College of Education, Norfolk, England

Under the personal patronage of Mr. George Kahn-Ackermann,
Secretary-General of the Council of Europe

INTRODUCTION

Interskola '77, the Tenth International Conference on Education in Sparsely Populated Areas was honoured to receive the personal patronage of the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Mr. George Kahn-Ackermann. The Secretary-General's recognition of Interskola's contribution to the development of international understanding in rural education over the past decade was symbolised by the presentation of the Council of Europe medal by Mr. Maitland Stobart who opened the Conference as the representative of the Secretary-General.

Thus, while it would be a pleasure to act as host to an Interskola gathering at any time, Keswick Hall College of Education was especially privileged to host Interskola '77 for the Conference marked a particularly significant point in Interskola's history and development.

The theme of Interskola '77 was "Innovation and Rural Education" and, while the papers contained in this report range over a variety of concerns such as in-service provision, curriculum and school organisation in sparsely populated areas, there is in all of them an underlying awareness of the need to develop greater insights into the rural school's relationship with its community so that it can become an integrated and educative agency not only for its pupils, but also for all those whose lives fill and form the rural community. It may well be through developed insights into such rural school and community relationships that we will come to realise just how any school can be transformed into the energising centre of its community.

In addition to lecture presentations and discussions, the Conference included visits to First, Middle and Secondary schools in Norfolk and Suffolk. Conference members also attended receptions generously provided by Air Anglia and Mann Egerton Ltd. Additionally expeditions were made into North Norfolk, Ely and Cambridge.

To be organising secretary of an Interskola Conference would be onerous indeed, were it not for the enormous fund of goodwill which it unleashes internationally, nationally and locally. Internationally, I would like to thank all those in distant places who worked so hard to publicise and coordinate activity. Nationally, our thanks go to the British Council and the Department of Education and Science. Locally, we are indebted to the local authority officers and teachers of Norfolk and Suffolk for their unstinted help with school visits and local arrangements. Within Keswick I must

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record my gratitude for the assistance of the staff generally. Particularly I would like to thank the small group who laboured so cheerfully. Here I refer to Peter Chatters, Mali Smith, Roy Baker, Norman Wordsworth, Geoff Lee, Andrew Howell, Roy Whittaker and Rita Clements - without her labours there would have been no conference report. Last my especial thanks to Ian Findlay who is the founding father of Interskola. In the pre-conference period, Ian's unassuming help and advice solved many a problem.

To all those who came to Norwich - from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Uganda, the U.S.A., Wales, Scotland and England - we hope your stay with us held value for you.

And so into the next decade. To Interskola '78.

ALAN SIGSWORTH, [Editor]
Organising Secretary,
Interskola '77.

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Opening address by Mr. Maitland STOBART
Directorate of Education
Council of Europe
Strasbourg
France

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a very great pleasure for me to open the 10th International Conference on Rural Education on behalf of my Secretary General, Mr. Georg KAHN ACKERMANN.

Before becoming Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. KAHN ACKERMANN was, for many years, a Member of Parliament in the Federal Republic of Germany and also Chairman of the Committee on Culture and Education of the Council of Europe's international Parliamentary Assembly. Mr. KAHN ACKERMANN has a very strong personal interest in education, and since becoming Secretary General, he has spared no effort to make the Council of Europe's education programme known to educators in our member States and to associate them with our work. It is this interest in education which led Mr. KAHN ACKERMANN to grant his personal patronage to your conference.

Although I have exchanged letters with Mr. Ian FINDLAY for several years, my presence at this conference is the first official contact between our two Organisations, and Mr. KAHN ACKERMANN hopes that these contacts will continue. For example, INTERSKOLA could apply for consultative status with the Council of Europe. This status is granted to international non-governmental organisations if they are particularly representative in their chosen field of operations and if they can help to achieve that "greater unity" between member States which is the declared aim of the Council of Europe. Non-governmental organisations with such status may be consulted by the Council of Europe. For their part, these organisations are given special opportunities to bring their views to the notice of the Council of Europe. Among the non-governmental organisations with consultative status are the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession, the International Federation of Secondary Teachers, the European Confederation of Agriculture, and the European Committee for Young Farmers and 4H Clubs.

Mr. KAHN ACKERMANN has asked me to give his warmest greetings to all the participants at the conference and to give you, Mr. Chairman, a special token of his interest in your Organisation's work in the form of this Council of Europe medal.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hereby declare open the 10th International Conference on Rural Education.

* * *

The Council of Europe

I would now like to say a few words about the Council of Europe, its place in international co-operation, and its work on education.

Since 1945, one of the most important developments in international relations has been the growth of intergovernmental co-operation. This co-operation is carried out in world organisations like the United Nations and in such regional groupings as:

i. The Council of Europe and the European Community in Western Europe;
ii. the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) in Eastern Europe;
iii. the Organisation of African Unity;
iv. the Arab League,
v. the Association of South-East Asian Nations;
vi. the Organisation of American States.

Today, there are nearly three hundred intergovernmental organisations, and their work covers most aspects of human activity.

In Western Europe where intergovernmental co-operation is highly developed, the largest regional grouping is the nineteen-nation Council of Europe.

The Council was set up in 1949, and has its headquarters in the French Rhineland city of Strasbourg. Every member State must accept the principles of individual freedom, political liberty, and the rule of law as the basis of its internal policy, and be ready to co-operate sincerely in promoting that "greater unity" of which I spoke earlier. Today, the Council has nineteen member States: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Many international organisations are set up to carry out just one specific task, e.g. air traffic control, defence, nuclear research, weather forecasting. The Council of Europe, on the other hand, is a general purpose organisation. Only military questions are excluded from its work which covers:

i. the international protection of Human Rights;
ii. social and legal affairs;
iii. public health;
iv. the protection of nature and natural resources;

ii.

v. regional and municipal co-operation;
vi. education and culture.

The CCC

The Council of Europe's work on education and culture is supervised by a Council for Cultural Co-operation, usually called "the CCC" from its initials. In this body, the Organisation's nineteen member States are joined by Finland, the Holy See, and Spain. The aim of the CCC's education programme is to help its twenty-two member States in their efforts to improve the quality of their education systems. In particular, the CCC seeks to make the results of important developments in one member State available to all, and encourages governments to harmonise their education policies wherever this is desirable and feasible. The CCC is an excellent forum for consultation and co-operation on education because of its wide geographical membership. It is in no way a super European Ministry of Education, which dictates policy to its member States.

In its work, the CCC is advised by:

i. the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education;
ii. the governmental representatives on its various committees of experts;
iii. the Members of Parliament, who attend the Council of Europe's International Parliamentary Assembly.

The Standing Conference of European Ministerial Education meets every two years, and the most recent session was held last week in Strasbourg where the main theme of the Ministers' discussion was "the school in its relations with the community". The next Session will be held in the Hague in 1979 when the main theme will be "Education and equality of opportunity for girls and women". It is likely that, during their discussions on this subject, the Ministers will examine the education of girls in rural areas.

From time to time, the Council of Europe convenes large-scale ad hoc conferences on important educational problems facing member States. The most recent was held in 1974 and dealt with the education of migrant workers and their families. The next will be held early in 1978 and will deal with "Society and the study of science, mathematics and technology".

The CCC works through four committees of experts, each of which is responsible for a major sector of education:

i. general and technical education;
ii. higher education;
iii.

iii. out-of-school education and cultural development;

iv. educational documentation and research.

Among the working methods of the CCC and its committees are: international treaties and agreements; recommendations to governments; the preparation and publication of surveys and forward-looking studies; meetings of experts; the exchange of information; the international co-production of teaching resources; and mutual aid programme. The CCC co-operates very closely with international non-governmental organisations whose work is complementary to its own, e.g. the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession and the International Federation of Secondary Teachers. Through this co-operation, the CCC obtains the views of teachers' and parents' associations on its work, while, in turn, the non-governmental organisations help to make known the results of the CCC's work by passing them on to their members.

The main themes in the CCC's education programme for 1977 are:

i. pre-school education;

ii. the education of the 16 - 19 age-group;

iii. modern languages;

iv. the education of the children of migrant workers;

v. the equivalence of academic qualifications;

vi. mobility of students, university teachers and research workers;

vii. admission to, and the reform of, tertiary education;

viii. the organisation, contents and methods of adult education;

ix. the promotion of the concept of permanent or life-long education;

x. and the development of a computer-based European Documentation and Information System for Education, usually known by the acronym "EUDISED".

I would be very pleased to provide you with information about our work on any of these points during the three days which I will spend at the conference.

The teacher bursaries scheme

However, as many of you are practising teachers, I would like to use this opportunity to bring to your notice one modest but practical Council of Europe initiative for teachers: the CCC's teacher bursaries scheme. The aim of this scheme is to help teachers to attend short in-service training courses in other member States. In most cases, they must be able to speak the language of the country in which the course is held. Thanks to this scheme, some two thousand teachers have attended courses in Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom since 1971. This year, about three hundred and fifty bursaries were available for courses in these five countries and also, for the first time, in Denmark, Spain and Turkey. Next year, Norway too will offer places to foreign teachers under the scheme. I used the adjective "modest" about the scheme advisedly, because the number of bursaries, although increasing steadily, is still small when compared with the demand. For each bursary which is awarded, there are about ten unsuccessful applications.

The CCC and education in rural areas

The CCC is very interested in the results of this conference, because it has carried out some work of its own on education in rural areas, and your proposals and ideas will be studied with care, both by the Council of Europe's Directorate of Education and by the governmental experts who participate in our school programme.

Last year, the Council of Europe's international parliamentary assembly, which provides many of the ideas for the activities in the Organisation's programme of intergovernmental work, adopted a recommendation on "The situation of rural and agricultural youth in Europe".

Among the Assembly's proposals were: the encouragement of pre-school education in rural areas; and the improvement of curricula for agricultural education. In September, the CCC and the Swedish authorities will hold a conference on the provision of pre-school education in sparsely populated areas. The participants will be asked to study the difficult question of how to make pre-school education cost-effective in such areas. They will examine the advantages and disadvantages of the various solutions adopted in member States: bussing, peripatetic teachers, mobile classrooms, and the use of educational television.

If any of you know of particularly interesting pre-school schemes in rural areas, please let me know. Our documentation on the subject is incomplete. In turn, I would be very pleased to send any of you the working papers and final reports of the conference in Sweden as soon as they are available. I would also be very pleased to send you the final report of a CCC Conference on "Agricultural education in Europe", which was held in this country, in Newport, in 1975. It was in part the findings of this conference that prompted the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly to call for the improvement of curricula for agricultural education.

I hope that I have shown you that the Council of Europe's work on education can be useful to you, both in your specialised capacity as experts in rural education and in your more general capacity as European educators. Like Mr. KAHN ACKERMANN, I would like to wish you every success for your conference.

Thank you.

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
OF THE
COUNCIL OF EUROPE

TWENTY-SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION

RECOMMENDATION 776 (1976)[1]

on the situation of rural and agricultural youth in Europe

The Assembly,

1. Considering that both the profound changes occurring in society and the present-day difficulties of European agriculture demand, on the one hand, considerable structural changes and, on the other, an ever-increasing professional and social mobility on the part of young farmers and rural youth, as well as a greater capacity to adapt to new situations ;

2. Stressing the importance of ensuring a proper economic future for European agriculture, in order that young people retain an interest in the farming profession ;

3. Believing that the problems of rural youth should be seen in the wider context of town and country planning, with a view to ensuring a balanced distribution of socio-cultural facilities ;

4. Stressing the paramount importance, in this connection, of an adequate network of rapid communications for rural areas with a view to creating new jobs in such areas, and thereby effectively encouraging rural youth to settle there ;

5. Considering that rural youth can only find its place in today's society thanks to a sound general and vocational education allowing for a true choice of a career ;

6. Stressing the importance of pre-school, school and out-of-school education for broadening the knowledge and favouring the social emancipation of rural and agricultural youth,

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[1] *Assembly debate* on 27 January 1976 (21st Sitting) (see Doc. 3706, report of the Committee on Agriculture).

Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 January 1976 (21st Sitting).

ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE
DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

VINGT-SEPTIÈME SESSION ORDINAIRE

RECOMMANDATION 776 (1976)[1]

relative à la situation de la jeunesse rurale et agricole en Europe

L'Assemblée,

1. Considérant que les changements profonds qui se produisent dans la société, ainsi que les difficultés que traverse actuellement l'agriculture européenne exigent, d'une part, des adaptations structurelles considérables et, d'autre part, une mobilité professionnelle et sociale et une faculté d'adaptation de plus en plus grande de la part des jeunes agriculteurs et de la jeunesse rurale ;

2. Soulignant qu'il importe d'assurer un avenir économique satisfaisant à l'agriculture européenne, afin que des jeunes continuent de s'intéresser à la profession d'agriculteur ;

3. Estimant que les problèmes de la jeunesse rurale doivent être considérés dans le contexte plus large de l'aménagement du territoire, de manière à assurer une répartition équilibrée des ressources socio-culturelles ;

4. Soulignant à cet égard l'importance d'un réseau de communications adéquates et rapides pour les régions rurales en tant que facteur primordial pour la création d'emplois dans ces régions, pouvant à leur tour contribuer efficacement au maintien sur place de la jeunesse rurale ;

5. Considérant que la jeunesse rurale ne pourra trouver sa place dans la société d'aujourd'hui que grâce à un enseignement général et professionnel permettant vraiment le choix d'une carrière ;

6. Soulignant l'importance que revêt l'enseignement préscolaire, scolaire et extrascolaire pour élargir les connaissances et faciliter l'émancipation sociale de la jeunesse rurale et agricole,

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[1] *Discussion par l'Assemblée* le 27 janvier 1976 (21e séance) (voir Doc. 3706, rapport de la commission de l'agriculture).

Texte adopté par l'Assemblée le 27 janvier 1976 (21e séance).

7. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

I. invite the governments of member states :

a. to speed up the process of ratification of the Convention for the Social Protection of Farmers in order to ensure the earliest possible effective application in particular of Articles 8, 9 and 10 ;

b. to encourage the regular participation of rural youth in the activities of the Council of Europe's European Youth Centre ;

II. promote and, where necessary, include in the work programme of its appropriate intergovernmental committees activities on problems such as :

i. implementation of an agricultural policy which will guarantee young farmers a fair income ;

ii. carrying out and intensifying regional development policy designed to develop infrastructures in rural regions, so creating job possibilities ;

iii. helping the establishment of young farmers by adopting appropriate financial aid policies ;

iv. improving their living conditions ;

v. development of social and educational facilities in rural communities ;

vi. encouragement of pre-school education ;

vii. promotion of general education, alongside out-of-school education, as an instrument for social emancipation and encounters between rural and urban youth ;

viii. development of vocational information and training, paying due attention to the special problems of young women in a rural environment ;

ix. establishing a professional status of women working in agriculture, and thereby ensuring them the same social rights as women working in other professions, for instance pay during illness and pregnancies, holiday allowance, and equal rights as far as taxation and pensions are concerned ;

x. improvement of agricultural education curricula ;

7. Recommande au Comité des Ministres :

I. d'inviter les gouvernements des Etats membres :

a. à accélérer le processus de ratification de la Convention relative à la protection sociale des agriculteurs, pour assurer l'application aussi prompte que possible de ses dispositions et en particulier de ses articles 8, 9 et 10 ;

b. à promouvoir la participation régulière des mouvements de jeunesse rurale aux activités du Centre européen de la jeunesse du Conseil de l'Europe ;

II. d'encourager et, s'il y a lieu, d'inscrire au programme de travail de ses comités intergouvernementaux compétents des activités traitant notamment des problèmes suivants :

i. assurer la mise en œuvre d'une politique agricole garantissant au jeune agriculteur un revenu équitable ;

ii. poursuivre et intensifier la politique de développement régional, en vue de développer l'infrastructure des régions rurales et créer ainsi des possibilités de travail ;

iii. faciliter l'installation des jeunes agriculteurs par une politique d'aide financière appropriée ;

iv. améliorer les conditions de l'habitat ;

v. développer les ressources sociales et éducatives dans les communautés rurales ;

vi. favoriser l'éducation préscolaire ;

vii. promouvoir l'enseignement général autant que l'éducation extrascolaire, comme instrument d'émancipation sociale et de lieux de rencontre entre la jeunesse rurale et urbaine ;

viii. développer l'information et la formation professionnelles, en particulier pour ce qui concerne les problèmes propres aux jeunes femmes rurales ;

ix. créer, pour les femmes travaillant dans l'agriculture, un statut professionnel leur garantissant les mêmes droits sociaux que ceux dont bénéficient les autres travailleuses, par exemple le maintien de la rémunération en cas de maladie et de maternité, les congés payés, et l'égalité des droits en matière d'impôts et de retraite ;

x. améliorer les programmes d'enseignement agricole ;

xi. difficulties connected with primary education in the country, such as one-teacher schools, school transport and incentives for teachers ;

xii. transport between country and town, so as to make it easier for children to have access to different educational establishments ;

xiii. encouragement and help for the work of young farmers' associations, and for the establishment of recreational facilities ;

III. invite the governments of the member states, in order that the above-mentioned objectives may be realised, to contribute to the cost of training consultants to help and advise young people on their personal, family and occupational problems, as well as on the future of farming and the protection of the natural environment.

xi. étudier les problèmes que crée l'enseignement primaire à la campagne, tels que les écoles à classe unique, le ramassage d'élèves et les incitations susceptibles de fixer les instituteurs en milieu rural ;

xii. résoudre les problèmes de transport entre la campagne et la ville, notamment en vue de faciliter l'accès des enfants aux divers établissements d'enseignement ;

xiii. stimuler et aider les associations de jeunes agriculteurs dans leurs travaux, et encourager la création de facilités récréatives ;

III. d'inviter les gouvernements des Etats membres, en vue d'atteindre les objectifs énoncés, à participer aux frais de formation de consultants ayant pour tâche de conseiller et d'aider les jeunes dans la solution des problèmes qui se posent à eux en ce qui concerne leur situation personnelle, familiale et professionnelle, ainsi que l'avenir de leur exploitation et la protection du milieu naturel.

EAST ANGLIA: AN INTRODUCTION

Mr A.R. Cartwright

However one defines East Anglia - and it is not appropriate in this short paper to discuss the various boundaries which have been proposed for the region - the area may fairly be described as low lying and either flat or gently undulating for the most part. Even the chalk escarpment, dignified by the name of the East Anglian Heights in some atlases, is little over 100 metres in its higher parts, while Britain's greatest terminal moraine in north Norfolk, though producing some attractively hilly scenery, is of no greater altitude. The major part of upland East Anglia consists of a great spread of glacial deposits, chiefly boulder-clay, which mantle the underlying 'solid' rocks to produce a dissected plateau, the levelness of which is exceeded only by that of the Fens in the west of the region.

The natural fertility of soils derived mainly from the deposits of the last Ice Age or, in the Fens, from marine silts and drained peats, has combined with a relatively dry (about 600 mm per annum) and sunny climate to provide some of the best arable farmland in Britain. A considerable proportion of East Anglia is given over to crops of barley, wheat and sugar-beet, while vegetables and small fruit are very important in the extreme east and west of the area.

Agriculture has always been the chief economic mainstay of the region and its original labour-intensive nature resulted in a close spread of rural population, served by a correspondingly even scatter of small market towns. Increasing mechanisation in the farming industry has meant that more and more has been produced by a steadily diminishing work force. In Norfolk, for example, the total of full-time males in agriculture declined from 23,700 in 1961 to 10,600 in 1974.

This declining demand for agricultural labour has had significant outcomes: people have had to seek alternative work in the towns, which in turn has resulted in the need either to commute or to migrate. That the latter has happened on a considerable scale is evidenced by the long-term pattern of rural depopulation and the growth of the towns, particularly of large centres such as Norwich, Ipswich, Cambridge and Peterborough. To this rural-urban migration has been added an outward migration from areas of population pressure, notably London and the South East. Government encouragement of the dispersal of employment has added to this movement. In Norwich, for example, the

May and Baker pharmaceutical factory represents overlow from a congested site at Dagenham, while Her Majesty's Stationery Office has moved half its staff from London to new premises in the northern part of the city. Peterborough has a considerable 'new town' development and other centres, such as Thetford and Haverhill, have accepted substantial numbers of 'overspill' migrants. The result of this in-migration is that EastAnglia now has the greatest percentage increase of population in the whole country (in Norfolk alone it rose by 5100 in the year ending June 1976), the more remarkable when it is set against national trends of slow growth and even, recently, of actual decline.

The primary sector, then, offers a declining number of jobs to the school-leaver. The secondary sector is, however, expanding. The towns, even the little market towns born under different circumstances, contain a remarkable range of industries which goes far beyond that associated with an agricultural hinterland. Food and drink manufactures are, it is true, still very important but a great variety of mechanical and electrical engineering products is made, clothing and footwear are important (especially in Norwich), and about a quarter of all the country's books are printed in the region. It is, however, the tertiary sector which now provides the greatest proportion of jobs. The usual range of services found in any town are supplemented by, for example, a thriving insurance business in Norwich and the universities in that town and in Cambridge. New employers are attracted to the area by relatively cheap land, low rates, and cheap housing for their workers in agreeable surroundings.

The variety of long-established employment, coupled with the influx of new enterprises, has prevented unemployment from becoming as acute as it is in some parts of the country. Nevertheless, there are pockets where the job situation is less favourable - notably in north Norfolk - but attempts to obtain Government help for them have been unsuccessful.

Though jobs are no harder to get in East Anglia than in many other parts of the country the wage-levels which accompany them are below the national average, for many of them are in the lower paid occupations. Conversely, East Anglia lacks high-wage industries, such as coal-mining or large-scale car manufacture.

What impact do the geographical and economic factors outlined above have on educational provision in the area? Rural depopulation has been reflected in dwindling numbers in many a village school, to the point that closure has become inevitable. Those children remaining have now to be provided with transport, since they are no longer within walking or cycling distance of school. Local authorities are, in consequence, faced with heavy 'bussing' bills and children are no longer able to participate in out-of-school activities. Low income-levels are indeed partly offset by a lower cost of living than in other parts of the country - but the poor quality of rural transport forces many parents to run cars which they can ill afford. The fact that East Anglia has a car ownership level above the national average should not be taken as a sign of affluence! Lower rates may also be an attraction to the migrant but the accompanying loss of revenue, coupled with the current constraints on public spending, is likely to curtail the provision of many services, including education.

The lack of well-marked physical constraints which were noted at the start of this paper makes East Anglia an ideal area in which to study the operation of a range of factors on a relatively uniform surface - the relationship between soils and agriculture, the influence of man on the landscape, not least the effect of changing economic and social factors on the provision of education.

References

The general reader will find the following works useful:

Department of the Environment (1974) Strategic choice for East Anglia
East Anglia Consultative Committee (1968) East Anglia: A regional survey
East Anglia Economic Planning Council (1968) East Anglia: A study

The Structure Plans recently produced by the various county councils in the region provide a valuable source of up-to-date information.

PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS' IN-SERVICE EDUCATION NEEDS IN RURAL AREAS

Mr. C. Saville.

When presenting a paper such as this it is easy to fall into the trap of portraying a generalized picture which focuses on problems and constraints and fails to recognise advantages and opportunities. It will be quickly apparent to the reader that much of what is said in this paper is one person's perception, based on observations and limited experience in a small part of the total education service. It is impossible to avoid generalizations and assumptions that are based on untestable evidence. The purpose is to illustrate that teachers in rural schools do have particular in-service education needs and they do work with constraints and opportunities that are different to their colleagues in urban areas. To achieve this aim the paper is divided into three broad sections. Firstly it will consider the problems associated with the geographical and sociological implications of rural schools. Secondly a perception of the problems associated with the teachers' professional development in small rural schools. Thirdly some observations concerning children from isolated communities and parental attitudes.

It is paradoxical that the generally portrayed view of rural life is one of peacefully grazing cows and perpetual summer and beneath this postcard veneer are some serious social and educational problems. The idealized vision of rural life has attracted many town dwellers to seek the peace and solace of the English countryside. It is this influx of people from outside rural communities which has been one of the most important change agents in education in the countryside. The traditional 19th Century and early 20th Century village consisted of a fairly self contained group of people with a clearly defined social order. The local school master camethird in the hierarchy after the squire and vicar and a examination of any village school's log book will illustrate the importance of this hierarchy. The village school during that era was there to provide a basic literacy and numeracy course for the children of the village. This basic literacy and numeracy course was second only to the teaching of religion and particularly the catechism. It is a fair assumption to make that the teachers' expectation for children in those days was that the vast majority would follow in their parent's footsteps and work on the land, in jobs associated with the land or in service. To some extent a remnant of this expectation of children still exists. Memories of this rural life can still be found, children in some schools are quite used to saying "I want to go down" which loosely translated means, "I would like to go to the toilet". The "down" meaning down to the privy at the end of the garden. Teachers have been heard to say that,"that would be to hard" for my "Suffolk children", implying a perception that rural children were generally less able.

Since the 1944 Education Act the changes in rural education have been rapid and far reaching. The advent of the local secondary modern school, the raising of the school leaving age and the demise of the all-aged village school went hand in hand. At the same time public transport became less available and village people had to rely on their own means of transport. Whilst this was going on changes in population were taking place at an ever increasing rate, particularly the drift to the towns. This presented local education authorities with considerable problems. There was a general and fairly rapid decline and shift in pupil population in rural areas because houses which had once been farm cottages became a desirable country residence for retired people, or for city dwellers who required a country house. Some schools became so small that they were no longer financially or indeed educationally viable. The effect of this was that many village schools closed and children were transported to nearby enlarged schools. The pattern of staffing changed too, it is interesting to note that between 1960 and 1976 in an example of twenty village schools, the Headteacher in 1960, in 18 out of the 20 cases lived in the village in which he or she taught, often in the school house. In 1976 the ratios were nearly reversed. The same applied to the teachers within the school. Many teachers now live in the towns not only because they may wish to but because the price and availability of housing dictates that they do so. This change in population trends both on the part of the teachers and on the community has had several long term classroom effects. A cynic might say that you could trace the effect of providing a village with mains drainage to problems at the school. The advent of mains drainage usually implies the provision of a fairly substantial number of new dwellings. These new dwellings attract people from the professional and blue collar sections of society who have different educational expectations for their children. They are not so likely to accept the all pervading authority of the school as was traditionally applied in the villages. Thus the actual social mix of children in the classroom has changed.

The most direct effect of rural isolation for the teachers in respect of in-service education is the distances that teachers have to travel to maintain professional contact with their colleagues. Some teachers may travel up to 30 or 40 miles in order to attend a Teachers' Centre. It takes considerable will-power and sense of purpose to travel 30 miles on a winter's evening on what are at best C class roads and at worse not much better than farm tracks.

Because the population is sparse, the schools are small and therefore many of the primary schools are organised on a two, three or four class basis. This implies that each teacher will have a system of vertical grouping within the classroom. Whilst accepting that it might be educationally desirable to vertically group children there is no question of an educational debate in a village school, it is a matter of fact that vertical grouping takes place. Where the population trend is changing this further diversifies the levels of ability within each class. The teachers have to compensate for the fact that there may be very few children of one particular level of conceptual growth in any given year group. Because the children live some distances to school there is the whole question of transport and the fact that some children may leave home as early as a quarter past eight and not arrive back again until quarter past four. For a five year old child this makes a long and potentially tiring day. The effect on the secondary school child is equally severe, it means too that the school has to make additional and complex arrangements in respect of any after school or weekend activities for the pupils. Distances from the child's home and immediate environment has the effect of posing additional problems in respect of relationships between home and school and the understanding by the school of the environment and likewise the contact and understanding that the parent has with the school and its aims and ethos.

It is possible at this point to highlight some of the issues that the rural situation poses in respect of teacher education.

1. To what extent have teachers an understanding of the sociological implications of population changes in rural areas?
2. What are the effect of isolation and distance from the educational community?
3. The teaching problems posed by vertical grouping and teacher expectation of pupil's progress.
4. The constraints of distance and isolation on developing home school relationships and community involvement.

The second section of this paper is intended to look at the question of the teacher's professional development and constraints on that development for teachers in rural schools. It is necessary to explore the question of developing curricula for professionally isolated schools. Does this isolation outlined in the first section have an effect upon the village school teacher's professional development? It is worth considering for a moment the reasons why teachers opt to teach in small schools. Many of the teachers in small village schools are married women whose husbands'work may have brought them to that area. Others may have been tempted by the delights of rural life while some could have come attracted by the idealized notion of working in a small school. The likelihood is that they will come from different backgrounds, live in different places and have differing levels of motivation for personal and professional development. What rural isolation does do is to pose the whole problem of the development of socio-professional interchange. The isolation from professional peers and a tendency towards rustic reclusiveness means that the initiative to look beyond the immediate educational environment for the further development of professional skills may be dampened. The cosiness of village school life, and this applies not just to the primary sector but to the secondary sector as well, can breathe a sense of satisfaction with the status quo. A glance at the number of secondments for full-time further professional study from small rural schools will illustrate this point. It is not that the local authorities are unwilling to second teachers from these areas, it is the fact that the applications for secondment are not made so readily as they are from the larger schools. This seems to imply criticism of the teachers in these schools. This is not intended, it is to make the point that rural isolation may have an effect upon the teacher's desire to seek opportunities for professional development. It could be argued that because of this isolation and lack of interference many educational innovations have stemmed from rural schools. I am sure that Lorna Rideway when writing her book on vertical grouping in infant schools was well aware of the fact that this grouping had been going on to a greater or lesser extent for over 100 years. One could look too, at the impact of Sybil Marshall's work from a Cambridgeshire village school. This had far reaching implications for the British Educational Scene.

The hypothesis that rural isolation dampens the initiative to leave the cosiness of the small educational community to take part in the wider professional development scene could stem from the difficulties that the threat that innovation could make upon a small cohesive group of professional people. There is an observable tendency for teachers from village schools to take a fairly independent line in teacher discussions. The line being that no-one else understands the problems associated with their work. This public independence is not so readily reflected within the village schools where it appears that there is less opportunity for questioning and debate. This may arise from the difficulties that teachers are faced in terms of buildings which are often old, usually indifferent and although exception is made in terms of providing them with additional monies they may not have access to more sophisticated curriculum apparatus. It may be that they perceive themselves as a professional island and stick together for the sake of mutuality.

It is unlikely in a school with three teachers that collectively they can make a full curriculum offering. It is to the eternal credit of the teachers working in these small schools that there are very few instances where music or P.E. are not at least attempted. But it would be unfair to pretend that in certain specialist areas all expertise was theirs. Local Authorities have attempted to cover this by providing peripatetic teaching forces. Not only is there the question of curriculum balance but also the problem of coping with the less able and the very able child. Both these points indicate the comprehensive range of skills required and of the need for constant renewal of those skills.

It is difficult to provide adequate support for any curriculum innovation that may be undertaken when the numbers may be disproportionately small. In the secondary sector much has been done to develop inter-school co-operation and involvement through the advent of the C.S.E.'s boards and the movement of teachers from one school to another in the procees of the moderation of C.S.E.work. Where the reorganisation of secondary education has taken place or is about to take place, there are in-service needs of a nature which are difficult to organise not only for the geographical reasons but because of the upsetting nature of the reorganisation process itself which may be perceived as a threat to stability. Reorgansiation presents very particular and pertinent in-service education requirements. In the case of a small secondary modern school which is about to admit the full ability range of pupils the teachers within those schools need support to develop their skills to cope with the addition of pupils who are potential university students. We have the growing question of the need for retraining as a result of teachers being redeployed. This need will grow as pupil numbers decline and the rationalisation of the teaching force takes place.

Because the majority of schools in rural areas are so small the career structure for the teachers is confined and the opportunities for gaining experience and additional responsibility are limited. In the village primary schools the Headteacher, usually, has a full time responsibility for a class and is thus unable to undertake much developmental work with his or her colleagues during the course of the working day. Thus the career tendency has been for an Assistant Teacher in a village school was was seeking promotion to apply for a larger town school which held posts of responsibility. This would be seen as a necessary step in his career. In turn many of the Heads have been appointed to village schools on the basis of their experience of responsibility in larger urban schools. This implies a need for the development of the skills of management in a small institution.

It is interesting to speculate that the tendency in rural schools has been to have a much more authoritarian type of regime. We have considered already whether there is the same desire or need to question or evaluate. It is observable in the case of newly qualified teachers who have been assigned to village schools that they can find themselves out of philosophical step with their more experienced colleagues and have to make rapid adjustments to the prevailing norm of existing practice, although one should add that this is not the prerogative of village schools.

One of the areas in which teachers in small rural schools continually need support is, at the same time, one of their greatest advantages. The use of the environment as a teaching resource. It is sad sometimes to observe teachers with a group of children discussing, for example, Elizabethan England and Architecture using prepared texts or work cards when up the lane from their school are the most marvellous examples of tudor architecture. At the other end of the spectrum we see teachers who have done imaginative work with children investigating their local environment. The tragedy is that other teachers do not have ready access to hear of or observe the work which has been done by their colleagues. Some schools operating under the most adverse conditions produce displays of musical and dramatic skill which they share with the community. Should these attitudes be fostered by legitimization? Several schools join together to have combined sports days so that the older pupils can match themselves with their peer groups. It is these and similar occasions that may provide the only meeting points for teachers from individual scattered schools.

In conclusion to this second section it could be said that the most sensitive need is the development of professional contact. Through the development of this professional interchange could come support for innovation, support for developing professional skills and the sharing of experience. In designing any in-service work for teachers from rural schools one must have upper-most in mind the constraints under which these teachers operate as well as the opportunities which the small schools provide.

The third section is intended to look at some of the problems for children in village schools. The first section discussed the transportation problem. Because some of the children live in isolated farm houses or cottages the infant teacher is faced not only with a potentially tiring child but one whose social development might be limited. Add to this potentially difficult mix the problem of a child's early language develoment which may be affected by isolation and the teacher has already severe problems on her hands. Not only does the teacher in this circumstance need the skills of recognition of potential handicaps but the classroom management techniques of being able to cope with the problems that she has identified. Infant teachers generally are currently voicing the opinion that children are coming into school less able to cope with the accepted early skills. Concurrently the teacher is having to deal, may be for the first time, with the son or daughter of the professional newcomer, who has read every article on education that has ever appeared in the Sunday Colour Supplements. If the latter has aspirations for his child in terms of what the education system should provide for him then at the same time the school has got to cope with what one could only call the low expectancy of some parents. It is often a matter of ribald humour when one refers to the "turnip syndrome" of East Anglia. There is ample evidence to show that the number of pupils, even with the influx of professional and semi-professional people, that take up six form places and the number of university entrants tends to be below the national average.

It is difficult for the parents whose child is whisked away by coach to school each morning to relate home and family life with the aims and objectives of a school with which they have very little contact. They may only see the teacher from one parents evening to the next, that is if they have the transport to go to that function. For the child, friendships and friendship groups developed at school may not be available at home, the child's friends may live at the opposite end of the catchment area 8 miles away. If the child is handicapped in any severe way the journeys may be even longer and may even involve the child in being boarded. Although these points may appear to be trivial when seen in print, the reality is different and potentially more serious. For the rural secondary school with its common problem of coping with the stresses of adolescence comes the additional problem of the school being the only place where teenagers from isolated communities can work out their group behaviour. The distance and isolation of the parent of the teenage pupil tends to exacerbate the problem. It should be stressed, that the reduced size of many rural secondary schools is such that they have not had to fall back on artificially designed methods of coping with the pastoral problems of the pupils. In the small secondary school the teachers have the dual function of both pastoral and curriculum care. It is these complex skills that need constant nurturing and development in order to make the work, which is heralded by many as being of the very best, even better and giving the teachers additional skills of problem recognition and the growth of understanding pupil needs.

At the beginning of this paper it was pointed out that it was easy to generalize and focus on problems rather than on possibilities. This should be re-emphasised at this concluding point. It is important for those who are involved in the provision of in-service education to recognise and build upon the intuitive processes already at work in rural schools. It is sad to reflect that we have tended to provide blanket in-service education provision, assuming that everyone has the same needs wherever they teach. It is essential that the providers of in-service isolate the need to help teachers develop their own research skills. There is little doubt that the traditional modes of in-service education are not the answer to many of the teachers' problems. The provision could move towards more problem focused and research based activities which will involve teachers within their sphere of operation and legitimize the constraints they articulate. Because the issue is small in the sense of the larger education scene it is not insignificant to the participants who work within that arena. It is no good pretending that the vast majority of teachers are going to get into their cars and travel 30 miles to savour the delights of a Teachers' Centre. It is no good pretending that their problems are going to be answered by an intellectual power house or by remote curriculum boffins. What is suggested they require is a recognition of the practical classroom teaching problems that present themselves day by day. They need to have opportunities to focus on strategies that they could employ to identify,develop and evaluate. Teachers need access to regular professional contact to develop on-going discourse with their colleagues.

It should be recognised that many Headteachers of rural schools are operating under the severe pressures of a full-time teaching commitment whilst concurrently trying to develop an identity for the school in a changing community. Headteachers and their colleagues have to meet the pressures of a changing population and all that implies plus the pressures of the highly articulate new rural middle class. They have got to accept these pressures and cope with the particular and peculiar needs of the indigenous population in a non-patronizing manner. The teachers need a wide curriculum competence and the skills of classroom management including evaluation in order to cope with the widely varying age and ability ranges within the one class. There is, without doubt, an immense bank of talent within village schools which needs to be available as a resource for in-service work. The skills and experience of teachers in rural schools has long been admired by other educationalists. It is self-evident that, like any teachers, they need the support, encouragement, revitalization and recognition that sound professional education should provide. Above what must be stressed is that there is need for the "providers" to learn too.

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MEETING TEACHERS' IN-SERVICE NEEDS IN RURAL AREAS

Mr. W. David Smith

I ought perhaps to make it clear at the outset, that in our examination of In-Service needs and provision in the Rural Area, Chris Saville and I have deliberately not taken the standpoint of the local authority or of a providing institution. Rather we have chosen the broader canvas, his concern has been to look at what is significantly different in the rural area, mine is to look at provision of support whatever its origin and to relate that provision as nearly as possible to teachers in rural schools.

Inevitably then I must begin with the local authority itself, for it is the local authority which has the basic responsibility of providing an efficient education service, therefore for the induction and continued education of its teachers, but this must been seen in the context of a teaching profession acquiring an increasingly strong voice in the development of its own professional affairs and of academic institutions acquiring enhanced status and an independent voice in the provision of a range of support. The James Report, Teacher Education and Training, 1972, presented the case against over-dependence upon initial training and convincingly argued that the best education and training of teachers is that which is built upon and illuminated by growing maturity and experience. This statement of principle was welcomed widely, but it raised problems of the inadequacy of resources and the lack of co-ordination in the existing facilities. The local authorities had developed their in-service work with teachers principally through their advisory staff. All had recognised that it was insufficient to inspect schools to monitor standards, but it was also necessary to provide support within the local authority by employing advisors to help probationary teachers, to run courses for other teachers and to provide on-going support in schools. The patterns of organisation of these advisory teams varies, but in general their work is co-ordinated by a Senior or Area Advisor or Inspector. In the last decade there has been a marked tendency for authorities to stress the general function of their advisors and to allocate to each a number of schools, for which they have a general responsibility, in addition to a specialist role related to subject area on a children's age-group, which they may undertake more widely within the authority. In general, schools appear to value having a particular individual as their professional advisor, one who can be easily approached in order to link the school with other members of the L.E.A. or with outside agencies. Rural schools present particular difficulties for advisors. A large number of schools, each containing only a small staff, scattered over a wide area represents a clientele not easily organised in groups according to interest, expensive to bring together and expensive in terms of time and travel to reach. The present financial situation has reduced radically the opportunity to release teachers during working time for in-service work, and in those small schools, which would require replacement staff for release to become possible, it is now too expensive to contemplate. The present accentuation upon accountability in the education service has led some education officers to see a future increase in the inspectorial role of L.E.A. staff to the detriment of their function as providers of in-service education, and, to compensate, the increasing development of the role of the advisor as a co-ordinator of the work of providing agencies.

The second shot in the armoury of the Loacl Authorities has been the provision of Teachers' Centres. These have arisen in a typically British individualistic way, using a large variety of buildings and having a range of establishment from full-time professional heads or wardens with professional and secretarial assistance, on the one hand, to the other extreme where the part-time services of a teacher are the sole paid resource. Initially, Teachers' Centres were established to facilitate curriculum development and in-service training, many have developed this role and become dissemination points of ideas and information. Despite variations of emphasis which are discernable in every centre, all have contributed to the assault on the isolation of the teacher in the classroom. The existence of a meeting place has encouraged the sharing of ideas, the pooling of knowledge and experience and the critical evaluation of curriculum models and materials. An examination of the programme of a Teachers' Centre shows an impressive array of working parties, discussion groups and workshops, all focused upon the outcome from their work in terms of perceived benefit to classroom teachers in their daily work with children. Just as Teachers' Centres exhibit a wide physical disparity, so they show a continuum of outlook. Some are geared in very closely to the in-service policy of the L.E.A. and offer a large number of courses led by the authority's advisory staff. At the other end of the continuum is the model of the Teachers' Centre as 'neutral ground', the policy of the Centre being directed by the teacher members of its committee and the Warden being very much encouraged to act in an entrepreneural capacity in the development of its programme. Again the Teachers'Centre has an immediacy and an availability to large numbers of teachers in an urban context which it is impossible to provide in a rural area. Some attempts are being made to solve the problems of the distance-decay factor by using sub-centres within these areas so that teachers are not presented with unacceptable journeys to their meeting places. Certainly the necessity for a flexibility of approach and for work with relatively localised groups has been well proved.

The dissemination of educational research and of project materials has been undertaken by a number of national bodies, notably the National Foundation for Educational Research and the Schools Council. The latter, its full title is the Schools Council for the Curriculum and Examinations, was established in 1964. It is an independent body with a majority of teacher members, and it has undertaken a vast number of curriculum projects, inevitably with varying degrees of success. Initially its attention was concentrated upon six main areas of concern: the primary school curriculum; the curriculum for the early leaver; the sixth form; the teaching of English; secondary school examinations and the special needs of Wales. The composition of the Council, with the majority representing teachers' interests, has not been approved universally, and there has been no lack of critics of the Council's achievements. The teacher majority is a reflection of the teaching profession's concern to control its own professional evolution, and is seen again in the statement of the Council's general principle,

> ... that each school should have the fullest possible measure of responsibility for its own curriculum and teaching methods based on the needs of its own pupils and evolved by its own staff

To this end the Council has produced a large number of individual projects each of which has produced for teachers guides and source materials to help them in their work in the classroom. In addition to the work of these national bodies individual teachers gain support and breadth from their work with their professional associations, often through subject or age-group divisions, through subject associations themselves and from their work on examination bodies. H.M.I. visit schools and provide a programme of teachers' courses on a national and regional basis.

Institutional support for in-service work comes mainly from the University and Polytechnic Departments of Education and the Colleges of Education. The former have prime responsibility for award-bearing courses such as Bachelor of Education degrees, masters' degrees and specialist diplomas, both on a full-time and a part-time basis. They also mount day conferences and short courses for teachers. Again true to its tradition of 'doing different' the work of a University Department in East Anglia is undertaken by the Cambridge Institue of Education, an independent body which is funded directly by the Department of Education and Science.

Nationally the Colleges are in process of being reduced radically in number, the total number of teachers in initial training being reduced from 125,000 in the early 1970s to 46,000 in 1981. This latter figure includes the provision of the equivalent of 20 per cent. of the total number for the development of the in-service work of the colleges. Thus at a time when the institutional status of the colleges has been altered by their absorption either into Colleges of Higher Education, Polytechnics or Universities so their role has been broadened. This represents an additional resource for the in-service programme and for the staff of the surviving colleges it represents a challenge calling for a much more widely based contribution, and an undoubted opportunity which should have most beneficial results in their work with students in initial training.

In recent years in-service provision has frequently been termed a jungle. I hope the undergrowth now appears less formidable and the tangle less complex than when I began, and that those of you to whom I have been stating the obvious will bear with me for the sake of those to whom the English education system is less familiar. The message from what I have said is I think clear. In the context of a multiplicity of provision in a period of acute shortage of resources it is incumbent upon all whose responsibility it is to develop an in-service and induction framework to mark out identifiable paths and to co-ordinate fully and effectively the available resources of buildings and manpower. To this end this College has established an advisory committee containing L.E.A. and teacher representatives and each L.E.A. in East Anglia has established or is in process of setting up similar consultative committees with teacher representatives and nominees of the providing bodies.

In conclusion, at the risk of being accused of being parochial, I wish to identify certain developments of the work of this College with particular reference to support being offered to teachers in rural schools. If to this point I have appeared somewhat negative in my concern for the problems of rural areas, perhaps in indicating some of the opportunities for development possessed by teachers in them I may redress the balance. In September, 1978 the College mounts a B.Ed. course for serving teachers which is designed specifically to utilise their professional concerns and to enlarge their horizons in various ways. The degree contains a common core of study based upon the investigation and evaluation of classroom practice and a series of options suitable for teachers of children of the various age ranges. One of the second year elective units is in Rural Education, a course designed specifically for teachers who work in rural primary and secondary schools or in schools which receive pupils from rural areas. Again the course stresses the positive aspects of the rural setting, one of its aims being to study approaches to the utilisation of community and school resources in relation to curriculum development. Some of my colleagues have for many years wished to have such an opportunity to develop work in depth with teachers in rural schools and prize highly this opportunity to do so. Examples of short courses which are being planned for next session to support the work in rural schools are courses in the teaching of reading to younger children for the men heads of rural primary schools, who as a consequence of re-organisation will find themselves teaching classes of children of a younger age than previously. To help meet the problem of teacher release for in-service work we are planning a pilot scheme to involve teachers in the preparation of initial students for their programme of school experience. This preparation will enable the teachers to understand better the work of the College with students in their initial courses and also enable them to contribute more fully to the students' initial forays with children. It is hoped that the placement of students in schools will also provide an opportunity for releasing teachers to meet together with staff for the discussion of issues arising from these initial contacts. It is pleasing to note that this idea came from two sources - the teachers themselves and the College staff supervising students in the schools.

The third area of support being provided by the College is in school based work. Two members of the Mathematics department will spend half a day a week throughout the school year working in two secondary schools and their contributory primary schools. They will work with children and staff in both schools and each has prepared an individual programme after a series of consultations with the teachers concerned. Their plans include discussion groups, working parties and workshop sessions and we hope one of the outcomes will be the production of curriculum materials which will be worthy of wider dissemination. Both the secondary schools on which these schemes will be based were chosen because of their remoteness from a Teachers' Centre. The work has been planned in close collaboration with the local authority's advisors and it represents an opportunity of support in depth for innovation which could not otherwise be achieved. Two similar schemes in the Humanities are alco planned for the coming session.

In our meeting to plan our co-ordinated talks Chris. Saville and I both voiced our concern about the lack of research and hard knowledge about the needs of teachers in rural areas and of the evaluation of the effectiveness of support work undertaken. Again in a seminal and tentative way we are making effors to remedy these shortcomings so that together teachers, local authorities and providing agencies may make their most effective contribution to this eminently worthwhile venture.

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IMPLEMENTING OPEN APPROACHES IN THE SCHOOL

Miss E. O'Brien

Necton village is 4 miles from Swaffham, and approximately 25 miles from Norwich, just off the A47. As Norfolk is a large, sprawling county to administer, there are several Education Divisions, and Necton is on the edge of Western Area, with its office at King's Lynn.

Roughly half the pupils at Necton V.C. Middle School come from Necton itself. The rest come from neighbouring villages: Holme Hale, North and South Pickenham and Fransham (which may soon be closing entirely). None of these villages is much more than 3 miles away, so school transport does not involve children in an excessively long school day. School begins at 8.55a.m. and closes at 3.25p.m.

Necton Middle School is therefore a rural middle school serving the immediate surrounding area. It is hoped that, in spite of distance involved, the local populations of these villages will soon come to regard it as their school and take an active interest in its future development. Pupils returning to their villages will, I hope, take with them some new ideas, friendships, skills and leisure talents to enrich the life of their own communities. Just as they, in their turn, will give the school the benefit of their own separate local traditions.

Pupils come to us from 8-12 years. At the end of 4 years, they transfer to Swaffham Hammond Comprehensive School in Swaffham. This school is also served by South Greenhoe Middle School and Marham Middle School. Close professional liaison has already been established with these other Middle Schools and the exchange of ideas and experience is already proving fruitful. The Upper School has flourishing traditions, especially Music, and we look forward to following the further progress of our pupils until they leave school.

Necton Middle School opened in January, 1977, half-way through the academic year. But I had been appointed Head from 1st September, which gave me time, a term, to plan the curriculum, get to know the building, order books and materials - and above all, meet people. The forming of personal relationships with my local colleagues in education was extremely valuable and I am indebted to them for their advice, experience and local knowledge.

Luckily, I was not a complete outsider, having been spending holidays in the area for 6-7 years already. I knew a little - a cautious little -

about the realities of life in rural Norfolk. I admired, and was sometimes almost overwhelmed, by the number and beauty of its Churches - not least the lovely church in Necton itself, with its roof supported by angels with expanded wings.

Through Methodist friends I gained some insight into the strong non-conformist tradition with its admirable preachers. I saw the skill of the Norfolk farmer, now uncannily transforming the landscape back towards an earlier image of wide rolling fields and fewer and fewer hedges.

I met again the movement of families from crowded cities to the quieter areas; and the consequent "settling in" pains during the period of adjustment.

Under the surface - as always - was the current of past ages. The Norman Castle and Anglo-Saxons; the ancient pathways snaking across the face of the land.

I had a feeling therefore of strength and continuity. I wanted my school to find its place in this pattern; to gain support from the awareness of rich traditions - of life evolving constantly but always retaining some essential essence. I recognised that what demanded change was no failure on the part of previous education systems, but the natural reaction to changes in the community as a whole.

So, I tried to understand something of the village schools from which my pupils would come. What I found was a style of education that was sound - that had a sure respect for standards and quality. The pupils were taught to read with understanding, to master Basic Mathematical Skills, to behave in a mature, responsible way.

More than ever, I was forced to clarify my own educational theories and work out for myself exactly how my new school would build on these qualities and develop them to fit the requirements of the Nineteen Seventies and Eighties. Because I knew that the reason for making the change (from Primary 7-11 to Middle 8-12) must justify itself on these grounds - that it is fulfilling the more exact and demanding requirements of our complicated life style.

The answers I found are answers only to my own questions. I distrust sweeping generalizations, finding as I get older that life is infinitely subtle. How far these questions and solutions can be applied to other situations is for each individual to judge for himself.

On the debit side: - Possible loss of small classes; time and expense of travel;loss of sense of community as the children develop wider loyalties and interest; possible over-diversification of interests; damage to the life of the community itself. This last is a most serious, and often quoted fear and one which has enough substance to be alarming. The last thing that anyone would want is the impoverishment of local communities, many already suffering from the results of unemployment and only just hopefully beginning to benefit from the lack of mobility resulting from the Oil Crisis.

On the credit side:- Membership of a larger, therefore intellectually stimulating community; widening horizons leading to increased understanding and co-operation between local communities; greater facilities for Games and P.E., Music, Art, Crafts, Pottery, Homecraft; a well stocked library.

Well, what does this add up to? There is the heart of the matter - welding these disparate items into something and growing. It was not just a matter of what these pupils would offer the school. It was not even what Necton Middle School would offer them. It was what new situation could we all create by working together.

I feel that the school building itself creates, in brick and tile and wood, this very statement. It does not stand out aggressively and shout "Look at Me". It blends into the landscape and states its desire to be part of things. The strength is there, in the environment itself. Looking at the school, I sensed that if people wanted it and believed in it then it would work. But how would people be convinced? It could only be slowly, by consultation, by comprise, by joining in the life of the local communities - all of them - and by having them join in our life, too. Our educational aims must be clear at all times.

At this point in my thinking, I began to be aware that I must not lose sight of another essential function of the school. To open up, to interpret a large world and relate it to this smaller environment. It must be explained to people that education responds to the needs of society. What then are those needs? As always, the answers are confused. More technology - or a return to a simpler life. The benefits of North Sea Oil - or the growing awareness that even this new found wealth will soon run out. It is clear that a period is ending, even sooner than expected. Overall the arguments changing the moral dilemma - dare we risk the expansion of nuclear energy? Is Britain to remain an industrial nation or find a new role e.g. as a Service Nation, selling T.V. programmes, good public schools and inventive expertise abroad?

What kind of education does one offer a child to help him live in this world of uncertainties and conflict? I believe that we must approach this question with caution. Education cannot ever be used to solve society's ills. The extent of human knowledge is now vast - and what was once thought to be true is being daily discredited. But the power to think, to reject, to adapt, to appreciate - these are the human skills.

Therefore one must create a learning situation - a microcosm of life - an active setting within which pupils can attempt to solve mathematical problems; explore shapes and patterns and textures in wood; play a guitar or write a letter.

Thus, confidence is gained, to make mistakes and to learn - at best always a messy, untidy, infuriating process. But what other way is open to us? We must prepare our pupils to survive in a vast, bewildering world of haphazard events; to survive above all in a world of constant change. They must learn to weigh up alternatives and hopefully make a good choice. More than anything, our modern world calls for a high degree of tolerance of each other. This is a world of interdependance - we must learn to open out towards it and cope with its demands, stresses and strains.

I should like at this point to descend to more practical matters and describe the school building in more detail. It is made of brick, with dark roof tiles and dark stained wood. It is in rural style - sloping, low pitched roofs, blending into the locality, slightly above the level of the road, on the same side of the road as Necton Church. There is a large playing field and the grass slopes up at the back to a belt of trees.

Inside, the main building is the shape of an H. One side of the H is Upper School, the other is Lower School. The middle bar comprises the Library and Homecraft Areas. Placed at one end of the H are the Administration area, the Hall (a large, high-ceilinged area with a wood block floor. A P.E. store and showers complete this section) and the Music Room upstairs.

This building is clearly designed with a definite Philosophy of Education in mind. There is flexibility and space. Classes can be taught in single units in their own Home Base - or sliding doors can be pushed back so that two Home Bases can move freely and mingle. Or work can spill out from the carpeted bases into the Practical Areas. There the pupils have access to water and facilities for Art and Craft work. Audio Visual aids are also available especially slide projectors and cassette recorders which can be used as another method of providing the pupil with knowledge - or the pupil can use these aids as an alternative to the written answer. Playback systems allow pupils to listen quietly to stories.

The Library is particularly well sited for constant, easy access. This makes it natural for children to consult books at all times of the day. Teachers help pupils to become gradually more skilled in efficient research skills. I hope this will inculcate a lifelong habit of questioning and also give confidence that answers, with patience, can be found.

Pupils must learn to cope with the endless barrage of printed matter that officialdom showers on us - it is an essential skill in the retention of personal dignity and autonomy. I see the Library as the Power House of the school and would hope that pupils, as they mature into adults, will demand from governments, both local and national, full information and the tools to interpret it. I should like to feel that adults will extend and build on the awareness created during school years. Thus this community will continue to take an intelligent, active and informed part in running This Vital Rural Economy.

I remarked that class bases led into Practical Areas. This again is of value in an integrated day. Certain subjects must, of course, be timetabled e.g. P.E./Games or Music. But, as far as possible, the best teaching methods benefit from the flexibility of being able to use blocks of time. Children can be set series of tasks at their own level. Individual attention is then possible for those who need help. Answers to problems and tasks can be made in a variety of ways - in clay or wood, on tape or paper, in action or merely in thought. I believe it is important thatthe pupil functions as a whole person - not merely giving responses restricted to desk-bound writing. Experiment is the only way to explore the possibilities of a problem - and the solutions will also extend the pupil's awareness, e.g. David was studying Red Indian Tribes. He found out about their religion, customs, crafts etc. Then he modelled a canoe, learning how to choose tools for different tasks. He then painted the canoe. Then I discovered two programmes on T.V. about traditional Indian canoe making. He watched them and almost immediately commented on the colours of the real canoe. He found a piece of bark, studied the colours and adjusted his model accordingly. So, what had he learned? Most of all, I believe, a respect for craftsmanship - for knowledge and skills that are worthy of respect but which are not academically based.

To return to the Building... We are only starting to explore the possibilities of the uncluttered area that is the Hall. It is used for Drama, the pupils revelling in the space to explore thoughts, feelings and imagination. There are opportunities to explore relationships and events, to enrich life through awareness of self and of others. It is also used for County Dance and is equipped as a Gymnasium, with ropes, climbing frame etc., where pupils can explore their own personal space and learn the possibilities and limitations of their own bodies.

Above the Hall is the Music Room. It is a delightful room, spacious and light, with plain walls and carpeted floors. There are two practice rooms attached. I hope we shall be able to develop a strong musical tradition in the school - not too formal, but a joyful pleasure in "Music - Making" - a gift for life, to enrich the whole community. Already there is the nucleus of a little band, some recorders, a choir and many enthusiastic guitar players. I hope this will expand and provide another meeting point between the school and the community. A growth point for understanding. This first stage includes a kitchen. Pupils and Staff eat in the Hall. The second stage will include further playground space and class space for another 100 pupils therefore the school may finally expand to over 300 places.

A short while ago, we had an informal Open Evening so that Parents, Heads and School Managers could assess the building and its potential. The general feeling, so far as I could judge, was one of sympathy and approval - and recognition of the practical advantages of a spacious, well-designed and equipped new building. Now we must build on this first feeling and create lasting bonds with the society that provides our purpose for being.

Perhaps this is a good point to return to my philosophy, my ideas on education. I believe the whole process of education to be a hugely complex subject, and I believe methods of teaching to be correspondingly so. Each teacher needs a battery of skills to be used at his discretion. Each theory of education must not be blindly and uncritically adopted. It needs to be tested rigorously, objectively and honestly. Each teacher is a professional and must take responsibility for his own work. But co-operation among teachers leads to enrichment both for Staff and Pupils, and leads to a more balanced social setting.

It is perhaps a more subtle point than at first appears to state that there are many internal differences between a 7-11 and an 8-12 school. The older children are maturing very rapidly and great care is needed to guide their social and emotional development. This creates challenges - how to give the very young adolescent responsibility and self-discipline, while still keeping a "watching brief" generally. The child needs affectionate guidance, backing which is fairly unobstrusive and flexible teaching.

Add to all this, Mixed Ability. Greater demands are made on Staff. The teacher must expect - and provide - a wide variety of responses. He must be open-minded and never didactic. The school is a community made up of adults and pupils. It must work for the enrichment of all, not just the pupils. There must be constant consultation between the Head and the Staff - also between the Staff and Children. The Head's decisions must take into account the views and aptitudes of all. Enthusiasm and specialized knowledge must be harnessed. And this can often be found, not only among the Staff, but among the pupils as well.

Good education is about presenting Options and keeping them open until the pupil begins to recognize his own direction and follows it confidently. We must provide a 'family', supporting, loving atmosphere where experiment is not damaging, but revealing; where exploration is worthwhile.

By the age of 12/13, the pupil should have gained valuable self-knowledge and be on the threshold of the necessary limitations and choices that determine his route towards maturity.

A lot of what I have been saying perhaps goes somewhat 'against the grain' of a rural, conservative society - will there be conflict? I hope not, especially if we can remember the meaning of 'conservative' (with a small c) = to conserve what is best. This is an approach to which, basically, I am sympathetic. Evolution not Revolution - a cliche, perhaps, but a useful one. I find that, as I apply my ideas and theories, they mix and mesh with those of the Staff; sometimes being strengthened, occasionally modified. The children also add their reactions. Theirs is a voice that must be heard. The Schools Council Working Paper 55 on the 'Curriculum in the Middle Years' sums it up when it refers to the development of the child as a thinking person. This is rather like letting a child loose in your nice, shiny kitchen to make cakes. You view the mess and chaos with horror. But controlled experiment is necessary. Especially when the basic rules of knowledge and skill have been given to the child - in fact, only then. Perhaps one of the teacher's most prized gifts is the ability to judge when a child has adequate skill, knowledge or background experience and can reasonably be expected to do something with a fair measure of success.

To turn now to organization. The school is divided into 4 Year Groups. There are two men tutors and two women. They have general care of the children in their Year Groups - academic, pastoral, general organization. This means that pupils work within groups of 50+. I feel this gives them the security of belonging to a group easily identifiable by age. They are well known to their Staff, and by constant talking to Staff, I benefit from this personal knowledge. This Year tutor system is therefore fundamental to the organization of the school and the Year Tutors share with me the business of formulating policy, carrying it out - and modifying it where necessary. I cannot stress too greatly the need for constant consultation. There must be a willingness, on everyone's part, to be critical - to admit shortcomings where they exist. I firmly believe in this process - that human beings learn through their actions - through their mistakes, And that mistakes are only to be deplored when we do not learn from them (of course, I am not referring to careless or inefficient blundering). Carrying all this out can be emotionally wearing. And, of course, we must avoid the other extreme, of over reacting to passing difficulties. Judgement must be used as to when it is time to step in and make alterations. It is my habit to make a minor assessment of success/failure each half term. Six to eight weeks seems a reasonable length of time to submit a section of work for testing in this way.

I then ask myself two questions:

(a) Did I succeed in what I set out to do?

(b) Is this section now complete or is further time necessary?

Then at the end of a term, I make a fuller assessment, possibly including some form of testing where necessary. I find this method vital where teaching follows a flexible mould. It is very easy for a teacher - or a team - to develop something enthusiastically but with insufficient regard for the overall effect on the curriculum. Then a feeling of frustration and stress may develop, as teachers try to accomplish too much all at once.

Each term's planning is largely a matter of choice; of knowledge to be imparted, of skills to be taught. There must be absolute clarity about each section of work planned. Each teacher must be able to test it educationally and be prepared to test that the pupils have been enriched by experience and extended in skills.

This approach ties in well with the Year Tutor system. The Year Tutors must 'thrash out' with each other exactly what elements of each subject they will each be responsible for. Of course, education is a spiral process - nothing can ever be regarded as finally taught - there are always developments to be made as the pupils mature and bring their added experience to bear on the subject.

But there must be a basic division of responsibility about what is to be taught - a recognition that priorities vary enormously between the ages of 8 and 12. Decisions and choices can be extraordinarily difficult as Middle School pupils are eager and no teacher wishes to dampen inquiry whenever it appears. So, a great deal of tact and intelligent handling may be required by the individual teacher.

But this very struggle and sifting process is of great educational value. When one set of objectives has been achieved, one moves on to the next point. This sense of purpose helps avoid needless tedious repetition when there is so much to be taught. Perhaps I can illustrate this by means of our Humanities syllabus. Each theme begins in the local environment, e.g. in the 3rd Year, there is a study of Deserts and Forests, with particular reference to Breckland. Teachers 'flesh out' these themes as they themselves wish, with practical work and the use of the Library emphasised. But I have devised a list of skills and Basic Knowledge that I feel must be taught. Each teacher weaves this into her own scheme of work. In this way the pupil learns, e.g. to use a compass; handle a max/min thermometer; examine the effects of soil erosion scientifically; interpret a tithe map. All this within the context of the theme being studied. Thus, I hope, the important factor of relevance is taken into consideration. It is vital that children, too understand what they are being asked to do, and why. They must be kept informed, be invited to join in, and frequently, add their own general knowledge and skill to the task in hand. Then there is a genuine learning experience.

In any attempt to run a mixed ability system, materials and audio/visual aids are important. The more the teacher is released from routine chores, the more time he has to devote to individual pupils - and this is where the real benefits come. As we are all aware, good materials are hard to come by. They tend to be of a general nature, to fit a wide comercial market. It is obviously best to make one's own materials; but time and other commitments do not always allow. The various Reading and Maths workshops, the S.R.A. Kits to promote skills, e.g. Research Lab - these kits with work for children of all ability, with opportunities for children to mark their own work and assess their own improvement - these kits are of great use, if not over-used or over-praised.

Children today are growing up with audio/visual aids as part of their every day life. Again the larger rural Middle School can provide more of these aids. But they need to be used judiciously as they tend to encourage a passive role. Best perhaps are slide/projector sets designed to be used by individual children. They should be encouraged to make their own slides and cassette recordings. T.V. is a useful medium if there is adequate preparation and follow up work. We are also very fortunate in possessing a good stereo record player and a Music Room where music can be appreciated in pleasant surroundings.

In a Middle School one of the most pressing problems is the deployment of Staff to provide specialist teaching, e.g. in Homecraft or Woodwork; in Remedial Reading; in extending the Gifted child. Our solution, at the moment, is Staff co-operation. One member of a Year Team will undertake to supervise a large group while the other is released to teach a small group. We feel that fewer lessons in small groups is more effective where these subjects are concerned. Again, one has to be careful to keep the balance, as working too long in large groups can have an unsettling effect and it does make it harder for the teacher to check that standards are being maintained.

The question of keeping records is bound up with the evaluation of the curriculum. A start has been made on record keeping. I have constructed an English Profile which includes details on Reading Tests, Spelling, Reading Workshop, Private Reading (to make sure that children taste all the available varieties of Fiction, e.g. Science Fiction, Myth and Legend and Historical Fiction) Progress in English Language and Research Skills. All this information (built up over 4 years) is recorded on a single sheet and can be evaluated quickly. Details on the Maths Record include Basic Computation Skills and Maths concepts. The purpose of these records is a positive one - to provide continuous assessment and pointers to how improvements can be made in various areas where a child may be weak. I believe that pupils should be openly involved in this process and regard it as providing guide lines for themselves. These then are my ideas at the end of this first year. But I feel rather like Homer's Penelope - each evening unravelling the day's work and starting again. Perhaps this helps to keep me in the learning frame of mind - quite often an awkward, uncomfortable state without any sense of final certainty, But perhaps, to use another simile, teaching is like a river, keeping to the limits of its banks firmly, but continually flowing, fast or slowly, past an everchanging landscape.

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

THE VILLAGE COLLEGE

Mr. D. Gent

"As the community centre of the neighbourhood the Village College would provide for the whole man and abolish the duality of education and ordinary life. It would not only be the training ground for the art of living, but the place in which life is lived, the environment of a genuine corporate life. The dismal dispute of vocational and non-vocational education would not arise in it. It would be a visible demonstration in stone of the continuity and never ceasingness of education" - thus wrote Henry Morris in his Memorandum of 1924. It is my pleasure this morning to explore with you the contribution which village colleges have made to education in Cambridgeshire. To give you some idea of time scale, I feel the following milestones might help:-

1930 First Village College opened.
1939 Fourth Village College opened.
1954 onwards - Remaining Village Colleges built.
1965 Amalgamation of Cambridgeshire with Isle of Ely.
April 1974 Local Government Organisation - Amalgamation with Hunts and Peterborough.
September 1974 Comprehensive Reorganisation.

Today every village and hamlet in old Cambridgeshire is within the catchment area of a particular village college - an institution which is both a comprehensive school and a community centre for adults and young people.

Henry Morris was Cambridgeshire's Education Chief from 1922 to 1954 and his vision is now a reality. With the opening of Burwell Village College in 1967, the Authority's original plan for twelve village colleges was completed after thirty-six years. George Edwards, the County's late Chief Education Officer, claimed that the concept was as sound in 1970 as it was in the twenties, and argued for its extension to the urban situation as the best hope of meeting the needs of the modern community.

The village college has, over the years, been the subject of many encouraging references, and government ministers, lecturers and teachers in training have, in particular, extolled the virtues of this concept - cost-conscious ministers, perhaps because they spotted in the village college the potential means of making the most economical use of accommodation, lecturers, philosophically-burdened, possibly because they recognised in village college a clear statement in brick and mortar that education was more than a classroom activity; and examination-conscious students possibly because (and who could blame them?) they believed it to be a suitable subject for their dissertations. All have played their part in publicising the village college. Unquestionably village colleges have had many successes over the years but they have also had their failures: the growth and extension of the idea, the fulfilment of Morris's plans was slow - and no doubt had to be! The impact of the colleges on the average villager was slow to make itself felt once the initial excitement had gone. Some villagers turned their back on them claiming that their particular village should have housed the particular building! Much of what has been written is very good; much of it is most flattering, and then again, some of it is almost theological in tone for there are hints here and there that all should believe in the village college even if practice cannot be contemplated yet awhile. In some respects, however, these apologists miss the essential point of the village college. They argue that it is to be recommended since it offers the best way of making maximum use of accommodation. It is a reasonable supporting argument for the village college: it does not describe its essential purpose.

In establishing a village college one is making a statement of philosophy: it is only by bringing together under the guidance of one mentor these various and hitherto disparate educational functions - school, community centre, further education provision, clinic, careers advisory sub-office, library - that one can guarantee the inspiration and resources which are necessary; that one can effect the proper relation of one function to the other for the general benefit of the community.

"It is I believe", said Stewart Mason, "essential for the successful implementation of the college idea that there should be no diarchy of authority over the school use and the community use of the buildings. If school and centre are two uneasy bedfellows in rivalry with each other and frequently at cross purposes, the result will be failure. If the institution is to teach community living it must in itself illustrate that harmony and integration which is the job of education to give to each individual. This in practice will only be achieved if one man is ultimately responsible to the committee not merely for the proper use of the whole set of college buildings but for the success of the community centre as much as for the success of the school. It will therefore be necessary to appoint a Warden of the college who will combine in the office the duties of Headmaster and Warden of the community centre". The Warden of a village college is without doubt a key appointment. However, it should not be forgotten that village colleges have increased tremendously in size over the years and one must ask what effect this has had on their role.

When Henry Morris drew up his Memorandum he was haunted by two spectres: the creeping city and the ghost village. (The same fears could not be expressed today with the increased mobility and with a strong commuter element in many of the villages. Perhaps I could mention en passant the suggestion made recently that we should consider organising study courses for commuters on the early morning trains to the City! The village college would be a bastion which could protect the rural region from the urban advance. It would breathe new life into the village - it should be seen as a heart pumping lifeblood round the villages though some have regarded it as draining the community life from them. The Hadow report of 1926 proposed that children over the age of 11 should be transferred to senior schools, each serving a group of villages. This provided the opportunity to establish the village college, not as a senior school with special facilities for further education but as a rural community centre, within which would be housed the secondary school, to provide facilities for countrymen in no way inferior to those offered in the towns and the cities. That this idea remains sound is evidenced by the Newsom and Plowden Reports which have echoed the familiar arguments which had prompted Henry Morris to describe the village college fifty years ago. Plowden argued strongly that primary education should also be associated more closely with the community. My colleague will be dealing with this aspect in his lecture on community primary schools in Cambridgeshire. Even the report of the Youth Service Development Council contains a similar message. It strikes a Cambridgeshire chord when it notes that school campus developments are most successful when under the overall supervision of one person, are administered as part of the community provision, and are operated in consultation with other community agencies. There are many fine examples but perhaps one of the most exciting is that at Sutton in Ashfield. The council prudently comments that the community campus has many advantages but it cannot be regarded as a universal panacea. An essential caveat - there are no universal panaceas in education!

Self-Government

The mission of the village college to involve the community is reflected in its government: the "contributory" villages, the adult members' associations and the parent-teacher associations are represented on the governing body. The members' association plays an active part in planning the programme and the social life of the village college. It is one of the principal aims of the community education programme to encourage "self-government" in the activities that are promoted. Some colleges are now involved in a self-budgeting scheme. Increasingly, parents and other adults are being involved in the curriculum of the school. The character of the community colleges is such that the involvement of adults in the life of the school is obviously much easier to arrange than where the school is completely unrelated to adult activities. Increasingly, we can look forward to the time when the governing bodies of the village colleges will be given more responsibilities. In the future it may be desirable to constitute some of the governing bodies of the village colleges, with appropriate representation from the primary schools, as the bodies responsible for the daily management of education within particular catchment areas. This, as much as the building of primary schools on the sites of the village colleges, as advocated by Morris, may offer, in many cases, the best means of relating primary and secondary schools.* The essential community function - the caring for the whole community - is to be applied as much in the town and suburb as in the rural hinterland. Indeed, the isolated and vulnerable social character of urban neighbourhoods may well make their particular need for community colleges more pressing. But whilst its mission has, I believe, a universal character, its place in Cambridgeshire has obviously been determined by special circumstances.

* I believe the village college is a concept for all places in spite of the fact that much of the language used to describe the philosophy of the village college seems to pre-suppose that town folk are significantly different from those who live in the country. Like our late Chief I would argue for its extension into the urban situation. It is generally accepted that community colleges up and down the country derive from the village colleges of Cambridgeshire. The debt to Morris cannot be over emphasised for he provided the philosophy and ideals which still motivate supporters of the community college idea today.

Morris's Concept

It was a remarkable achievement to establish the first village school - Sawston - in 1930. It should not be forgotten that when Sawston was built 47 years ago the then Board of Education, far from sanctioning expenditure on building for further education, would not even acknowledge the need for a senior school to have an assembly hall. It is to Morris's perpetual credit that, having persuaded a county council to accept the idea of the village college he then proceeded to solve the formidable problem of persuading those who had faith in his vision and various charitable trusts to contribute nearly £11,000. And in this context it should also be recorded that besides gifts of land, specific items of furniture, fountains, trees and pieces of sculpture, he accumulated subscriptions in money amounting in all to nearly £23,000, which did not include the contribution which he himself made through lecture tours and other means.

For Morris the village college buildings were not simply shells in which we carried out our educational responsibilities, they were agents "exercising on young and old all the time their unspoken but potent influence". Gropius saw in the Henry Morris dream the educational expression of his own ideas concerning architecture. He,accordingly, agreed to design, in collaboration with Maxwell Fry and in particular with Henry Morris himself, Impington Village College, the last to be established before the War. It is, indeed to be lamented that this was to be Gropius' only essay in major public buildings in this country. Certainly, his achievement at Impington is a splendid memorial to what is possible. It is, therefore, altogether fitting that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government has added the college to the list of buildings of special architectural and historical interest under Section 32(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1962. Professor Pevsner, in his book on Cambridgeshire, refers to Impington as "one of the best buildings of its date in England, if not the best" and as "the pattern for most progressive schools built after the Second World War". Its particular quality is as much related to the juxtaposition of the various wings of the college as to the detailed architectural consideration that has gone into the casting of each element.

The brief for Gropius and Fry was to harmonise within one building the separate needs of each element of the village college. This approach continued the established practice of separating school from adult accommodation. No more fitting tribute could have been paid to Morris's continuing influence than the decision of the Ministry of Education to make the village college the starting point for the revision of their Building Bulletin No.2 which deals with secondary schools. Following a visit by their officers to Cambridgeshire in 1961, the Ministry wrote: "To see the Village Colleges and to learn about them has made us feel that whatever we do we must not design another school in the ordinary sense of the word".

The imaginative approaches advocated in recent Department of Education and Science building bulletins reflect the lesson learnt for they suggest that there are ways in which attractive teaching areas can be provided which would meet as well the needs of adults. Fifth and sixth form centres, for example, can obviously serve as youth centres or adult common rooms and lecture rooms. Such a formula is in keeping with the contemporary conviction that senior students need what is essentially as adult environment.

The so called 'generation gap' gives rise to many problems but I believe the community college concept is nearer to solving them than any other method.

Expansion of the Movement

By the time Impington was established ,the village college movement, for such it could now be called, was gathering momentum. Many of the visions of Morris's imagination (he was always the practical idealist) were now being translated into reality. Already minor details described in his 1924 memorandum were being amended in the light of experience: the essence of the concept, however, was being more than justified. The first generation of those privileged to work in the village colleges were demonstrating that they were equal to the task. The involvement of local people in the life of these new establishments was ample proof of what was possible. The scene was now set of a further programme of expansion. The village colleges had attracted much national publicity. Many who visited them returned home determined to build their own. The War came and this particular tide was missed. There could be no more village colleges either in Cambridgeshire or elsewhere for the time being.

At the War's end the primary concern, of course, was to make good the damage done and to implement the principal provisions of the 1944 Education Act. Many of the new authorities were soon building more schools in a year than their predecessors had provided in a decade. Alas, few could now spend their energies as Morris had done in the 30s, in translating what was possible into the much bolder concept of what was essential - the community college. In this another opportunity was missed - for in building a community college they would have found that it was essentially more than the sum of its parts and as such would have constituted a very good investment.

Cambridgeshire continued its programme. The original plan for twelve colleges is now complete but the County's amalgamation with its neighbour - the Isle of Ely - afforded an opportunity which was seized to provide further community colleges. Following amalgamation with Huntingdon and Peterborough in 1974 our first urban community college was designated - no doubt others will follow when the financial climate improves.

Colleges as "Comprehensives"

During the period of the establishment of the village colleges many accepted the belief that it was appropriate to select children at the age of 11. Cambridgeshire had its grammar schools, many of them with long traditions of outstanding service to the community. Morris, whilst recognising the obvious - that the village college's community mission could hardly be complete when the academically gifted child travelled elsewhere for his education - accepted, for the moment at least, this arrangement. He did so, in part, because he was a passionate believer in excellence and could see in the grammar school a tradition of that academic excellence which was to be preserved. But philosophies changed and we were confronted with the problem of recasting our provision to meet the needs of a comprehensive system of education. There are variations but generally village colleges cater for the 11-16 age range. Education for students in the 16-19 age group in the Cambridge area takes place in 6 secondary schools and further education establishments. A wide variety of courses is offered though not all the courses are available in all the centres. Since September 1974 most young people (private education apart) have been attending the local comprehensive and parents relating to it for the very first time - it has brought about a greater togetherness and added involvement.

A Typical Village College - if there is such a thing for they are very individual!

Physically it is a comprehensive school with additional facilities to meet the educational and social, cultural and recreational needs of adults and young people. At times when not being used for compulsory education of children and young people, the whole campus becomes available for voluntary use. You would find within it the usual but well planned provisions for secondary education. These will include teaching spaces for the humanities, science laboratories, specialist areas for art/design, drama and music, domestic subjects, gymnasia and extensive playing fields. In addition adults will have a common room and lecture room and the young people will have specialist accommodation for social meeting, activities and counselling.

Swavesey Village College - one of the smaller.

1. Serves an area with 11 villages and a population of 8,000; transport system in use by day and night:

2. has 510 pupils on roll and 32 teachers (full and part-time):
3. has 768 adults in formal classes:
4. has 782 adults in self-governing groups:
5. has 265 young people on youth centre books:
6. has squash courts and swimming pool provided by the community:
7. is included in a pilot scheme for block budgeting:
8. is involved in various community service projects:
9. is booked every weekend for dances, receptions, parties, etc:
10. has outdoor facilities used throughout the holidays.

The staffing structure is of Warden at the helm, assisted in development by Deputy Head, Senior Community Education Tutor, Community Education Tutor and appropriate teaching and ancillary staff.

Community Education

Before closing I feel I ought to explain what I mean by 'Community Education', having made reference to it throughout. 'Community' is a very fashionable word and much in evidence in educational circles and beyond. It has its cynics as does any worthwhile development. The designation of this section of the education service as "community education" describes the area of the work covered by the Education Department in the provision of leisure-time activities for the whole community, and emphasises the continuous opportunities for education - education throughout life.

It has often been said that the village colleges and centres cater for the needs of the community from "the womb to the tomb". I would suggest that "Community Education" implies:

(a) Community involvement in the life and work of the local school.
(b) School enquiry into, and involvement in, the life and work of the surrounding community.
(c) The practical involvement of parents in the education of their own children.
(d) The provision of further education opportunities for parents and other adults in the community.
(e) The use of the school as a focal point for community activities.
(f) The broadening of outlook and organisations to include provision for (i) informal education, (ii) social education, for all sections of the community.
(g) The continous involvement of the community in the process of their own education.

So that I am not accused of total bias I give you the following contrasting viewpoints:

from 'An Education Service for the Whole Community' Inner London Education Authority - October 1973.

"Few teachers nowadays would deny the importance of leisure time and recreational activities in the overall development of the child or young man or woman. The links between primary schools and the play centre service, whilst improving, are still comparatively few. Similarly, although growing, the recognition of the youth service as an important and integral part of the education service is far from universal. Too many schools regard the adult education institutes as of no concern ot them, yet the quarter of a million students who attend them each year are the parents and aunts and uncles and the voters who are the potential supporters of their schools and, perhaps more important, the essential ingredients of the social environment in which the pupils live. The youth service with its prize concern for young people too frequently fails to realise, in practice, that adult education is the continuation of its work, and adult education institutes, that the young people in schools and youth centres are their students of tomorrow."

by Robert Spooner - Leeds Headmaster, speaking at a National Conference.

"There was a danger, he thought, that the community school would come to be thought of merely as an aggregate of a secondary school, evening institute, youth club, public library and a few other public facilities. Any one could do that. 'It wouldn't have to go anywhere. But it would then become the finest educational band-wagon of all time. All you would have to do is climb on it and cheer.' Teachers knew from their experience that those who used the school at night were almost always using it merely as a building. Their activities were totally divorced from the school and did not involve the head and the staff. This was in no sense a community school."

from Schools Council Working Paper No.27

"That neighbourhood education and recreational facilities could be greatly improved by combined planning and the more intensive use of buildings can scarcely be in dispute. Within an integrated complex of community provision, the knowledge, skills and interests of many citizens - including teachers - may find great scope, both for individual satisfaction and development and for communal activities and service. On a campus richly provided to meet a diversity of needs, young people might direct much energy and enthusiasm into worthwhile channels, and parents hitherto indifferent or antagonistic to school might be willing to take a new look at things in such a setting."

I began with Henry Morris, the founder of the present system in Cambridgeshire. I would like to close by referring to a conversation with John Brackenbury, Warden of Impington Village College. He told me that, like me, he is not so starry eyed as to believe that a Village College with all the advantages that this has can change the world. No it can't do that. He believes that because it is for the people, to the people, by with and from the people, of the people, in the name of the people, and if it addresses itself to them using the vocative thou, it can be used by them for their benefit and enable them to have life more abundantly.

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Mr. R.L. Kilsby

I came to Waterbeach in 1970 and felt at once that the School had a role to play in the life of the village beyond the traditional one.

The principle reasons were:

1. The village of 2½ thousand people had no public hall.
2. The village had made an initial contribution when the School was built in 1952.
3. The School was ideally situated in the centre of the village.

I therefore encouraged immediately use of the School by village organisations and as a result of this I was invited to join a County working party examining the possible dual use of Primary Schools. Subsequently Waterbeach became one of the first six officially designated C.P.S.

Schools now for many years have had Parent Teacher Associations but I feel that very often a Parent Teacher organisation appeals only to a limited section of a School's parents and that perhaps there is an even greater need to bring the parents not attracted by the P.T.A. into the School's sphere of influence. This can only be done by extending this sphere to take in the community as a whole. By opening up the School to the whole neighbourhood and by involving the School in the neighbourhood, it is possible to make the School the focal point of the community. The benefits for the School are enormous. I feel education should be concerned with real situations and with first hand experience. More often than not these can only be obtained in the immediate locality. By pushing the School's boundaries back to include the village and by opening up the School by providing reasons for the community to come in, then the School is not only making these first hand experiences possible but one is attracting into School not just parents but grandparents, older siblings and pre-school children.

Cambridgeshire, with its Village Colleges, has long demonstrated that dual use of School buildings is possible, and my own experiences teaching in a Secondary School elsewhere which was deliberately made available to the public, had convinced me of the value of such an approach. In addition there is the very strong economic reason for such a movement. School buildings represent a large capital investment and it would appear foolish to allow this investment, and the facilities therein, to be idle for all but five hours of the day, and for only forty weeks of the year. We use the Hall for a variety of functions and we took steps to ensure that the swimming pool was used throughout the holidays, and by local organisations in the term-time evenings. It was the opening of new extensions, however, which led to a big step forward, for this meant that we no longer had need of a terrapin classroom which had previously eased our accommodation problem. We were able to use this building as a Community Centre and to provide comfortable accommodation for a range of activities throughout the day since the Education Authority provided a carpet and easy chairs. The local branch of the County Library had been open for only one half hour a week but by offering accommodation in the Community Centre it was possible to open it for ten hours per week with seven times as many books. The result was that immediately many more people came to the School.

In an attempt to involve local organisations the School, through the P.T.A., instigated the revival of the traditional village "Feast". This event, which had always been held on the Village Green, had lapsed after the war but has now been re-instated into the Village's calendar on the traditional day, but in a new form. The important thing, I felt, was for the various clubs and organisations to work together but with an incentive for themselves. It was agreed to organise the Feast jointly but to provide an opportunity for each body to be responsible for their own part of it. Thus a central committee representing all the organisations arranges the publicity, parade of floats, central ring attractions, etc., and the organsiations arrange their own money raising sidewhows, stalls and exhibitions. The event has proved more successful than was ever expected, reviving a real community spirit and providing an opportunity for present and former residents to meet new and old friends.

This Feast committee became in effect the executive body of the Community Association the School was required to inaugurate upon becoming an official community School. Every resident is regarded as a member of this Association and the Community Council has representatives of both individual members and the local youth, religious, sporting and cultural organisations.

In an attempt to further improve the community spirit and to provide a forum and a means of communication, the Community Association publishes a twice termly magazine, "Beach News". This is distributed free to every house in the School's catchment area and is financed by the advertisements of local traders.

I believe it possible to summarise the terms of reference given to the Community Primary School very simply as "keep an ear to the needs of the village, and if it is possible to do something to help, do it". One such area of need was centred on those children aged from birth to five years. The Infant Welfare Clinic had met for many years in the local British

Legion Club. While those facilities were adequate they were not ideal and I felt that not only could we provide more appropriate and comfortable accommodation but that there were other advantages. It would provide a reason for mothers to come into School on a regular basis right from the time when the children were a few weeks old, and, possibly, continue to come with new babies, bringing with them the ones nearing School age so that the children themselves become familiar with the buildings, and I hope, with me. Moreover, some of the parents probably have young children already at School and it disposed of the problems of attending the clinic and meeting the children from School.

A second need was for something to cater for the mothers of this age group and the Community Association sponsored the formation of what became known as the "Wednesday Club" which arranges fortnightly meetings at the School and during which the young children are looked after by a rota of mothers assisted by older children from the School.

Finally there was an obvious need to extend the Playgroup cover to cater for the whole of the catchment area. Two playgroups already existed but there was an obvious need to cover the central part of the village. Accordingly another playgroup was formed and meets in the Community Centre. They use the School toilets and take advantage of the Infant Adventure Playground and apparatus left out in the Gym during School play times. Each year nearly all our reception children have had playgroup experience and the benefits are considerable, not the least that the first days are very peaceful!

The School is now used by some 27 organisations on a regular basis. A typical week would look like this:

	Community Centre	Hall	Gym	Staff Room
Mon.	Library, Playgroup, British Legion	Guides		W.I. Committee
Tues.	Library, Playgroup, W.I.		Netball	Parish Council
Wed.	Library, Young Wives Club, Guitar classes	Community Council	Keep Fit	
Thurs.	Playgroup, Red Cross	Infant Welfare Clinic Needlework	Badminton	
Fri.	Playgroup, Library, Village Society	Brownies		
Sat.		Football Club Dance		

In addition to accommodation I am able to supervise the use by anyone or any organisation of the duplicating and photo copying facilities the School has, together with the use, when required, of such audio visual aids as projectors, tape recorders, etc.

We also operate a luncheon club for Senior Citizens. Each week some twenty old people are brought to School by volunteer drivers where they buy a School dinner. They are waited upon in the Community Centre by older children from the School.

Now I know that many of you are saying, "But lots of Schools do this already". I know they are and I'm delighted but the difference is this: If I fail to make it home from Norwich tonight then the advertisement will be for a Head of a Community Primary School - the work will go on!

THE WESTERN ISLES COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECT

Dr. Finlay MacLeod

The pattern of life in small rural communities may seem so undramatic and unchanging that this could easily be regarded as natural and inevitable. Things tend not to happen with the same impact as in urban areas: so much so that one could believe that 'nothing is happening'. Against a background of hills, moor and sea, events in rural villages may seem insignificant - even when these events, such as steady, heavy emigration, may mean that the community is facing a massive crisis. But since rural depopulation seems a more 'natural' phenomenon than, say, inner-city disintegration, it is easier to take it for granted.

Just as the process of rural decline has its own connotations so too will the process of rural development. Such development may seem isolated, if not 'unnatural', in such a setting: as if people accepted the inevitability of reversal to the status quo of traditional values and practices.

Factors such as these affect the patterns of education which evolve, since they determine how the community regards and makes use of education. It was with a view to understanding these processes and as an attempt to devise appropriate means by which the community would make effective use of education that the Western Isles Community Education Project was set up.

The Western Isles, or Outer Hebrides, is a string of large islands stretching for 200 miles off the north-west coast of Scotland. These islands have a population of 30,000. The people are mainly Gaelic-speaking and live in villages around the island coasts. There are 60 primary schools, mainly of three-teacher size. There are 15 secondary schools, usually situated in the more densely populated areas. These are crofting communities with weaving and fishing supplementing crofting. Emigration and unemployment are major problems. Much of the land is infertile moorland on a layer of peat. One is very aware of the weather and of its constant changes. It is a strong environment in that it impinges on the individual in such a way that one is unlikely to forget the place. The people themselves are careful, curious and memorable.

As with many other areas in the country it was felt that the conception of education tended to be rather restricted to the work going on inside the school. To a large degree this work bore little relationship to the issues and problems in the community. Even the language used in the schools was not that of the community and it is only now through structures such as the Bilingual Education Project that the language and curriculum of the school are being more closely linked with the community. Education was used to provide skills in numeracy and literacy in English, and young people from these islands made good use of these skills - not infrequently away from the islands. Studies in other countries, such as Norway, have shown that schooling is geared more to urban life and that it prepares and encourages young people to leave the rural areas. People in areas of under-development quickly learned to use education as a means of betterment: hence the relatively large numbers of young people from areas such as the Western Isles who obtain higher education, Most of those do not return to their home communities.

The Community Education Project was set up as an attempt to extend the service of education to a wider sector of the population than those in school, and also to influence the education being provided in school so as to link it more with community life. A one-year feasibility study is currently being funded by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation and this will continue until October 1977 when a submission will be made to that Foundation to fund a subsequent three-year operational phase. This year's work is being undertaken by a team of two, and a project co-ordinator. The consultative committee is drawn from local authority members and officials, Van Leer Foundation, Scottish Education Department, University and Teachers Union.

In the submission to the Van Leer Foundation it was indicated that new educational provision be made to cater for age groups and interest groups not being adequately serviced by current practice. Three main themes emerged at this stage: those of pre-school, youth, and adult education. The crucial point of significance was the nature of the educational service which would be necessary if development was to be facilitated within these three broad sectors of the community. Possibly because those who were involved in the planning stage had a background in primary education, the aims of the Project were expressed more in terms of process than content. Rather than setting out a syllabus of what had to be covered if the Project was to succeed, the Project was seen as a means of facilitating individual and groups in the community to tackle their own problems from a 'Discovery Learning' or 'Problem-Solving' approach. 'Learning to learn' was regarded as being more significant than what was learned. As with primary methods this approach was advocated since it could give the participants skills and attitudes regarding themselves and others which would enable them subsequently to tackle community issues as these arose.

As an indication of what is intended on a wider scale during the three-year phase the team is working in one particular area during this exploratory year. Ness, in northern Lewis, was chosen since one team member is a native of the area. Ness comprises a district of some 14 villages, with a population of 3,000. There is a two-year secondary school in the village of Lionel. Pupils transfer to schools in Stornoway after the second year. Lionel primary is a five-teacher unit. There is a three-teacher primary school in the village of Cross. The community hall has been used almost exclusively for late Friday night dances. Ness has three different Presbyterian churches. There is one hotel and a number of illicit drinking clubs.

During the few months since the Project began in Ness the three broad themes of the planning phase have begun to emerge. A group of young mothers have come together, with the team's help, to provide playgroup facilities. Forty children have already enrolled. A number of issues quickly emerged. One mother, from outwith the Western Isles, now living in Ness, wanted to organize the playgroup and to have it in English. A group of some ten local mothers began to meet in each others' homes and ensured that the playgroup has a local flavour and be held in Gaelic. A second issue concerned fund-raising. A group of mothers organised a concert and dance. Because of this, the chairwoman, who belongs to the strictest of the three Presbyterian churches, resigned. The community centre committee voted against the concert's being held in the centre because it was being re-decorated. None of the mothers was on this committee. The following day some of the mothers visited each of the committee members at home or at work and managed to get the decision revoked. The concert and dance were held in the centre, raising £250. Many of the mothers in this group are now in daily contact with one another for the first time. No such group existed before, and certainly not one with so much vigour. Some of these mothers live three miles apart and now drive regularly to visit one another. Already they are thinking of representation on the centre committee. They are in regular contact with the Project team: without the team's backing it is unlikely that they would have got under way.

With encouragement from the team, a number of young people, aged 16 to 30, have formed themselves into a group called Oigridh Na Sgire (The Youth of the Township). Apart from a sponsored walk and village clean-up organised to raise funds and enable themselves to be seen throughout the area, this group has so far concentrated on providing adequate premises for themselves and others. There are plumbers and electricians and joiners in the group. They are to make toys for the playgroup. They are cleaning, repairing and redecorating the community centre (hence the playgroup mothers' difficulty in getting it for their concert) which had deteriorated, through misuse and under-use, to a sorry state. Along with the team and centre committee they encourage the use of the centre by different groups for different functions. They too are tackling their own problems and projects as they arise. Recently they have been considering the possibility of renovating and re-opening for community use a schoolhouse which has been empty for years.

Forming a very loose group at present, a number of crofters are interested in improving their means of producing and marketing vegetables. For the last three years they have bought seed in bulk from a common source, but marketing remains undeveloped. It is too early to say how this group will progress, but they too are seeking the team's advice. One member recently suggested that the team provide books and information which could be placed in the centre and that the group become a club. The concept of co-operatives is potent at present and the group are soon to be visited by a group from the West of Ireland who are involved in horticulture and other co-operatives. Here the team are working with the staff of the Highlands and Islands Development Board.

Numerous individuals in Ness, as well as groups and individuals from other areas, have approached the team with suggestions or seeking advice regarding their own communities. The team has also co-operated with other groups and teams such as the Bilingual Education Project. In joint ventures the two Projects have devised Gaelic materials such as books, rhymes and tapes for the use of playgroups, nursery schools and infant classes throughout the Western Isles. There is no doubt that much more could be achieved with these groups and teams if the Project team were stronger in numbers.

It is significant that the team has introduced the Project in Ness by working with groups which have arisen in the community, and not initially through the school. In an area such as the Western Isles where education has tended to be narrowly academic it may be that it will change in orientation only when groups in the community recognise the need for more relevance to everyday life in the education being provided. This Project regards the school as being one factor or group in the community, and the intention is that the Project will strengthen the work of all the groups which arise, so that these groups will learn to work together towards an improved community. Other projects such as the Bilingual Education Project work from within the school to help it become more aligned with other community groups for their mutual benefit. The school, as a community group, has tended to exist in isolation up until now. Only when the different groups are strengthened will school/home/community links become meaningful.

It may be that community groups other than the school will initially use the community centre rather than the school building as their focal meeting place. We may refer to this as the 'two-base' approach to community education. The place of meeting and the reason for meeting are essentially less important than the opportunities these meetings provide for social experiences and the learning of social skills. It is remarkable that many villages in the Western Isles have their own village hall or community centre (some of them recently built) but virtually all of them fail to provide a significant and lasting impetus to community welfare. This is not surprising when little has been done to stimulate their effective use by the community. It is as if new schools were built and left unstaffed. The team's work in Ness is determining that the community centre can be used effectively only after groups have developed to a stage where they require a meeting place to achieve their objectives.

When the full operational phase of the Community Education Project is under way in a number of communities, with dissemination throughout the Western Isles, the pattern and quality of life being promoted by groups and individuals in the community is likely to require from the local authority a new awareness of what is meant by relevant and balanced educational provision, and the schools too will be required to consider whether the social, practical and academic skills which they are offering are those most urgently required by people in that community.

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THE FUTURE OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

Dr. Roy Nash

Village schools are under pressure again. The relevant history of these schools begins more than a hundred years ago with the first wave of voluntary school building by the Churches and by such organisations as the British and Foreign Schools Society. These were small one-roomed buildings often modelled on the architecture of a small church or chapel. The second wave came in the 1870s with the introduction of compulsory education and the establishment of the school boards. The board schools, too, were mostly built to a common pattern. One or two rooms, an open fireplace, a yard with a toilet block and an attached house for the teacher. The third wave came in the first decade of this century following the transfer of the control of education from school boards to the County Councils. These post-1903 schools can again be recognised by an individual style. They are more generous in space and separate classrooms are provided. It was still usual to add a house for the headteacher.

At this time, the turn of the century, the impact of indistrialisation on village life began to change their character forever. The blacksmiths, ditchers, thatchers, shoemakers and so on lost their trades and moved away to the towns and cities. At the same time, and for complex reasons, many of the great landed estates were broken up and a new class of owner-occupier farmer was created. De-population which had affected the rural areas for decades at a gradual rate reached a peak during the inter-war period of economic depression.

After the Second World War the effects of the 1944 Education Act which re-organised secondary education were again hard on the village school. All children over the age of eleven were removed to secondary school. Parallel with all these influences was a steady overall decline in completed family size: a decline which shows no sign of ceasing.

These effects can be well illustrated by a concrete example.

We have studied an area of North Wales, a small area of just two parishes. The population in 1921 was 1010 which had dropped to 693 in 1971. In 1921 there were five schools with the following rolls: Trofarth 51; Llangernyw 101; Gwytherin 87; Pandy 62 - a total of 301. By 1968 when the schools were closed and the children transferred to a purpose-built area school in the largest of the five settlements the rolls were: Trofarth 14; Llangernyw 51; Gwytherin 19; Pandy 21 - a total of 105. The population has fallen by 31 per cent but the number of children in primary education has fallen by 65 per cent.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the response of the LEAs was to close non-viable schools, that is schools with fewer than 50 pupils on roll. The official reports recommended that rural primary schools should have a minimum size of 50-60 pupils and that the ideal size should be 120-150 pupils. I have no information about the number of schools closed during these two decades but they can be numbered in the thousands. Here is a statement by the former Chief Education Officer for Devon:

> "Between 1950 and 1960 we closed about a hundred. We're closing them occasionally now. It isn't a negative policy; they are being closed because they're uneconomical, educationally and financially. A small two-teacher school costs about two or three times as much per head to run as a larger school. Whatever people say, these small schools educationally can be too cosy, the quality of work not as good or as sharp as it could be. So we have a quite positive policy of setting up area schools"

For a few years there has been a lull in the pace of closure as the re-organised counties took stock and as econmic difficulties made new replacement buildings hard to finance. But now things are beginning to move again. The accelerating decline in completed family size and rigid planning controls are bringing about a further noticeable fall in school rolls.

My own research based on North Wales might be considered parochial and I will draw here on a Schools' Council Survey of 1975. A Field Officer visited 65 small schools in 29 LEAs (surprisingly not including Norfolk) in England and Wales in an exploratory survey of the problems. Three one-teacher schools and two four-teacher schools were included but the great majority were two and three-teacher schools. No information was available about the age of 13 schools but of the remainder all but 9 were built more than 60 years ago. At least 18 were actively threatened with closure. The Field Officer found that the teachers made a great contribution to community life. She commented 'local communities have much to thank teachers for in re-establishing social activities'. The teachers had differing opinions about the problems of teaching a two or three year course. Some welcomed the opportunities while others would have preferred to teach a single year group at a time. There were differing feelings also about the prospects of promotion. Some teachers said the idea had never occurred to them while others did feel that they might be overlooked. The most pressing problem seemed to be the difficulty of getting a supply teacher when a staff member was absent - this made their attendance at in-service meetings infrequent.

Resource provision was generally at a high level. A couple of schools were without a telephone and several lacked a field despite their location in the countryside, but almost all had a television, radio, tape-recorder or gramaphone. Library provision was often specially praised by teachers. The Field Officer felt that the teachers' main problem was their isolation. She noted that teachers often commented to her that they had welcomed the chance to see a new face. The survey did mention the costs of running small schools but gave no detailed analysis. Similarly no objective assessments were made of the attainments of the pupils but the survey commented favourably on the quality of education in these schools. Not all were of high quality but this is true of any random group of educational institution. The survey concluded with an account of three schemes run by various LEAs to give support to small schools. This is something I will return to at the end of this paper.

The survey raises all the key issues, economic pressures, the quality of education and future developments. I will examine each of these.

The problemsof cost head the list. We have carried out the first published work available on this subject. Our analysis deals with three models. (1) spare capacity model (2) Area School Replacement Model (3) Remote settlement model. These can be dealt with in turn.

(1) Spare Capacity

There are districts where sufficient spare capacity exists to allow re-organisation to take place without any expenditure on new buildings. This capacity may result from uncompleted area school plans introduced by the previous LEA, from former all-age schools purpose built in the inter-war period or simply from natural decline. A detailed study of one district of North Wales with a total of 503 pupils taught by 34 teachers in 13 schools could be reduced without any capital expenditure to 503 pupils taught by 27 teachers in 7 schools. The teacher/pupil ratio would rise from 15:1 to 19:1 but that is still far below the normal ratio in larger schools. The cost per head however would fall from £517 to £454. These figures are based on 1975-6 prices. It is interesting to note that the numbers of children who would need official transport would rise from 200 to 284 which is far less than might be expected and additional transport costs would in no way offset the savings to be gained by closing six schools. In fact the LEA would make an annual saving of around 12.5 per cent. This may not sound very great but such a re-organisation would withstand a decline of ten per cent in the numbers of children on roll far more economically. If the number of pupils fell to around 450 the number of teachers employed would be reduced to 22 representing a further saving of more than £20,000. This is obviously an attractive proposition to the LEAs. There is a case that resources are being used uneconomically and that is hard to justify.

(2) Area School Replacement

There is a classic instance of this, and indeed one of the few for which data are available, near Tregaron in the Welsh county of Dyfed. Here five schools were closed. Llangybi (1878) 36 pupils and 2 teachers; Betws Bledrws (1830) 15 pupils and two teachers; Silian (1855) 18 pupils and two teachers; Cellan (1900) 11 pupils and one teacher; Llanfair Clydogau (1877) 19 pupils and two teachers. In 1975 the pupils were transferred to a purpose built well equipped area community school. The costs of running the schools has had to be estimated. The total annual cost of the five schools was around £66,000. The running costs of the area school are around £46,000. This is a clear saving of about 32 per cent. However, this does not include interest charges on the £158,000 it cost the LEA to construct Ysgol Y Dderi - the new school. It is not the normal practice to include interest charges but they are a burden on the LEA and have to be met for a period of 20 to 30 years, If they are included then the running costs of the new school are greater than those of running the five old schools. There would, in fact, have been cheaper ways of re-organising the system. The LEA might have considered closing the two smallest schools, maintaining two Welsh medium schools with two teachers and 25 pupils each and an English medium school with three teachers and 40-50 pupils. Some renovations would have been necessary to at least one of the schools but the running costs would certainly have been no higher and quite probably lower than those of Ysgol Y Dderi. That is excluding interest charges of course. It is clear that Area schools are not, even in the most ideal cases, and this is an ideal case, automatically the best answer. They are not always the most economic form of re-organisation - they are not even, if the true costs are calculated, always cheaper than the admittedly expensive systems they replace. In the case of Ysgol Y Dderi the high cost, about £460 per head, is due partly to the transport costs which exceed £6,300 a year and partly to the generous staffing ratio of 16:1. This calls for comment. In 1976 there were in addition to the Headteacher, two junior class teachers, two infant class teachers, a nursery teacher and a craft teacher. The original plan had been to employ a specialist language teacher recognising the bilingual character of the school, but such a teacher seems not to have been available and the headteacher has made himself responsible for language work. There are indications that the high level of staffing and the provision of free transport for all children follow commitments made by the LEA in discussions with parents, teachers and managers: they are part of the price of area schools.

(3) Remote Schools

There are instances when schools will have to be maintained no matter how small they become. There are areas of high moorland and remote valleys where small settlements are five, six or seven miles from a larger village -in these cases it may be necessary to maintain a school of only one teacher and perhaps as few as 12 children. There are, in North Wales, a fair number of such places and it is clear from an inspection of the map that the closure of the 80 or more two-teacher schools in that region could be achieved only at enormous social cost.

It is clear from this that one cannot talk loosely about the economic benefits of primary school re-organisation in the countryside. Certainly it cannot be said that the area school is always the answer. Every individual scheme must be examined on its merits and a full costing of the various alternatives made.

Attainment

There is continual argument about the standards of education in small schools. It is probably one that will never be resolved for one man's concentration on the basic skills is another man's unablanaced curriculum. In other words, what are the criterion of judgement and who uses them? LEA officers are quite used to seeing teachers they consider as practising outmoded methods regarded as fine and even exceptional by parents. Who is right? Whose schools are they? Whose children are they?

It has to be said at once that no published data relating to the attainments of children in small primary schools compared with large primary schools is available. It is possible to pick up indications from NFER national surveys that standards of reading are certainly no lower in rural primary schools than in larger urban schools. Primary schools size has never been located by these studies as a factor depressing attainment. This is negative evidence. In what is as far as I know the only research of its kind in this country, our research tested the reading attainments of more than 600 pupils in 26 rural schools. There was no significant difference between the attainments of children in one and two teacher schools and those in larger schools. That is positive evidence. And that is almost all there is.

In fact it is hard to find inspectors and advisors who will say that the quality of education in the two-teacher school is necessarily of lower quality than that provided by the larger school. They will say that it depends on the teacher. Where the teacher or teachers are competent and hard-working the quality of the education will be high but where they are not the effects can be much worse than in the larger school. In other words a large school can carry an inadequate teacher but the two teacher school cannot. In the opinion of many advisors the risk is not worth taking.

The whole business of assessing teachers is fraught with difficulties. But it is done. Headteachers do it with probationary staff, advisors do it, inspectors do it, College lecturers do it. And during the course of our research, with a lot of help from advisors, we have done it. We grouped teachers into five categories which were derived from conversations with advisors. First were dedicated teachers who had been in their post for some years. They had no interest in promotion and indeed, most were thought rather old-fashioned in their approach by advisors and therefore not very likely to achieve promotion. They felt most at ease in their classroom: the business of teaching had become the central core of their life. Second were the ambitious. Mostly these were young teachers in their thirties who saw their present headship as a stepping stone to a larger school. Their aim was to make a success of the little school and to make certain that that success was noted. This had led many teachers in this group to experiment with integrated day approach, open plan or team teaching. Third were the established category. These teachers had relinquished the idea of being further promoted and accepted, gladly and without regret, the position of village schoolmaster. It is an important job. The Headmaster becomes a community councillor, he runs the village committees, people come to him for advice on their children's career after leaving secondary school, on planning applications, with personal difficulties. His school work settles into an established routine. He might himself admit that things have fallen into a rut. While an advisor might think the curriculum unbalanced, the basic subjects are well covered and the parents are satisfied. Fourth comes the category we have called uninvolved. There is the teacher who having perhaps failed one interview too many, becomes a little bored and takes up an interest in something else. He might run a pottery, he might write sermons as a lay preacher, he might find fishing a more absorbing way to spend his time. Finally there are the category of pre-retired. There are some teachers, I do not say all, I do not even say most, who having taught the same curriculum in the same way in the same schoolroom since before I was born, have retirement as their major objective. The curriculum is unimaginative and the teaching uninspired. Unless the infants teacher is willing and capable the children will probably do little but sit at their desks throughout the day throughout every day.

We can show that teachers in the dedicated category achieve significantly better than do the others. We can also show that teachers in the pre-retired category achieve significantly worse than the others. No differences can be detected between the attainments of children in classes of teachers in the other three categories. These findings support the commonsense view that the one and two teacher school is as good as the teachers - and they come in all sorts.

I would like to conclude by saying a little about support systems. It seems to me that we are going to have two teacher schools - to say nothing of one teacher shcools - for a long time to come. There are, as we have seen, areas of weakness which need to be tackled. The problem is isolation, of not being able to get out to in-service meetings and so on are capable of solution. The Schools Council survey mentioned above gives three examples of specific LEA schemes - a workshop session for headteachers to exchange ideas, a curriculum advisor for small schools, and a teacher advisor to promote inter-school contact between teachers and children - all of which aim to break down this isolation. The teachers are reported to be enthusiastic about these attempts to provide practical help. Cumbria has a scheme of this sort operated from the Wigton Teachers Centre. The desolate uplands near the Scottish border have suffered far greater de-population than most rural areas and the isolation of the schools in this district would otherwise be very great.

In-service training could be taken far more seriously. I would even suggest, since I don't work for an LEA and can speak freely, that a compulsory one week course each year would be worthwhile. The week could be taken off the school year if necessary. A great deal of sustained enthusiasm is created by successful in-service courses and the contacts made are maintained throughout the year.

The mobility of teachers needs to be considered very carefully. It is just not possible to dismiss teachers for less than gross professional incompetence, and even then it is a troublesome procedure; average incompetence has to be accepted. My own belief is that some way should be found to move below average teachers into larger schools where they would get greater supervision and help from senior staff. There are active proposals to introduce a voluntary early retirement scheme for teachers and this might be a real help. There might be something to be said for appointing head teachers on three year contracts, or for a three year probationary period but I am perfectly well aware that the teachers' unions would firmly resist those suggestions. However, it might be possible for LEAs to treat all two teacher schools as annexes of a larger school nearby so that the staff in the two teacher school would be regarded, for administrative purposes, as belonging to the base school but located in the small school annexe. A teacher might spend an initial two years in the annexed school and at the end of that time the teacher would have the option of remaining in the school or of returning to the base school. The LEA would hold the reciprocal option. If one teacher schools are to survive I believe that this would certainly be the best practice.

Resources as the Schools Council Survey pointed out, are generally adequate but there is a need for curriculum resource material rather than teaching hardware. I would like to see a central resources collection based on an Educational Technology Centre or Teachers Centre which delivers materials requested by teachers. It is not merely the cost of postage. I see the resource van as serving the same function as the mobile book library. The latter are quite common in rural areas. The advisor going out with the van would be able to bring news and advise. The teachers would be able to see the range of available material: tapes, records, slides, filmstrips, booklets, teacher texts, a stock of science and number apparatus, kits of materials dealing with specific concepts (magnetism, desity, electricty and so on), art and craft materials, tools, work-cards, musical instruments and museum type exhibits (fossils, tools, pottery, etc). Such a stock of resources and an expert delivery system to make sure it gets used could greatly improve the quality of teaching in average schools. The idea might be extended to a mobile classroom. I have a pet scheme for a mobile art classroom - art is, with science, and perhaps physical education, a subject of special weakness in small schools generally. I envisage a travelling art teacher with her own mobile art classroom - a caravan to park in the school yard for a week - who would work with everyone in the school on a scheme or project. Ideally something tied into community needs - posters for local events, an exhibition or picturs, models, prints, photographs for eisteddfodau and similar occasions. Children could work at ceramics, sculpture, produce a puppet show. There are endless possibilties.

Still in the area of resources there is a need for broadcasts suitable for mixed age classrooms. This is a simple matter of getting through to the schools broadcasting services. Small schools are not the only schools where family grouping is the norm.

Then there is the area of policy. LEAs should have a clear policy and announce their re-organisation schemes as early as possible. It might be worth having a review every fifth year. If a school got through the review, everyone would know that it would be safe for at least five years. This would avoid the problem of planning blight. Many small schools have lost pupils simply because parents, knowing that the policy was to close small schools, have preferred not to risk their childrens' education being disrupted by closure. Where area schools must be built - there are cases where they may be the best answer - they should be sited in a village. The practice of placing them at a neutral site or crossroads pleases no one.

It is my belief, then, that some village schools at least are here to stay. It is not always cheaper to replace them, there is no evidence that larger schools provide a better education, there are ways in which LEAs can give practical help. Some of those ways don't even cost anything.

* * * * *

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THE LOFOTEN PROJECT

TOWARDS A RELEVANT EDUCATION

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Department for Social Science
University of Tromsø
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ABSTRACT

The aim of the Lofoten Project has been to build up an education relevant to the local community, and, as such, an education that is meant to give the pupils conceptual tools to analyse their own material, social and cultural situation. With particular reference to the rural situation, the arguments for developing such an education are outlined by pointing out the impact standardized education on rural communities, by stressing the general advantages of integrated communities, and by indicating the advantages of locally relevant education. Analytically the article focuses on three aspects: Local knowledge, the role of the researcher, and the problems of social change. The innovation work carried out is an implementation of generative planning in which the research group has been acting to enable the teachers and the pupils to plan their own teaching and learning situation. In this context our experiences indicate the dilemma of planning a participatory teaching within a social system which previously has been developed to guarantee almost day to day learning results.

Project Team

The initial planning of the project was carried out during 1972-73 by Solstad, University of Tromso, and Bjorn Solberg, student of education at University of Oslo. Before the work in the schools began in September 1973, Asle Hogmo, University of Tromso and Tom Tiller, student of education in Tromso, joined the project. Since then Hogmo and Solstad have shared the responsibility of the project. Solberg and Tiller have been research assistants until Summer 1976. The four persons mentioned are referred to as the research group.

INTRODUCTION

The Lofoten project is an innovation or action research programme carried out in 7 comprehensive schools in the Lofoten region of northern Norway. The project, which began in 1973, has been developed by a group of research workers from the University of Tromso, in cooperation with school authorities at local and regional level, and a number of teachers in the schools concerned. The basic assumption is that rural communities can be strengthened by means of an educational system which reflects the local and regional situation - socially, culturally and economically. Thus, the work may be viewed as an aspect of regional planning in general. Educationally, the central themes are curriculum development and school and home relations. The project also necessarily posed problems that traditionally have not been of very much concern for educational researchers, and include questions such as the following: What is local knowledge? How can we develop local and regional knowledge in a form that can be included in the school curriculum? What are the effects of an education that matters for the community?

The present article is limited to a discussion of some of the topics mentioned above. Firstly, an outline is given of the ideas on which the work is based. Secondly, attention is drawn to a few aspects of the changes implemented, concentrating on the problems related to identifying, developing and teaching local/regional knowledge.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

To explain the need to integrate local and regional topics into the school curriculum, it will be necessary to trace the development of compulsory education in Norway. Some likely consequences of the traditional type of schooling for rural communities will be mentioned, with particular reference to sparsely populated and remote areas. The probable advantages of a more locally and regionally oriented education will also be described. Finally, comment will be made on one or two of the most obvious objections this project is likely to meet.

A historical outline

The general trend of development of Norwegian compulsory education has been much the same as in most European countries. During the last century, the range of subjects has increased and so has the number of periods in the school year, and the total number of years of schooling required.

This expansion has been paralleled by a standardization of the organization and content of compulsory education. (Incidentally, Norway has been influenced by private schools only to a very limited extent). Until 1959 there were two separate Education Acts, one for urban and one for rural schools. The process of harmonizing rural and urban schools may, however, be traced back at least to 1889 when the Education Acts were introduced simultaneously for the first time.

It is not only the process of standardization that is of interest in our context. The direction of this process is equally important. It can be argued that new Education Acts and minor regulations between such acts have attempted to mould rural schools in the image of the existing pattern of urban education (cf. Hoigard and Ruge 1971, p.128 and Dokka 1972, p.13) Thus, the standardization of Norwegian compulsory education has also been an urbanization of rural education.

The standardization of compulsory schooling has more easily been implemented as regards content than organization (i.e. transforming rural schools from multi-age to single-age classes). At least since the thirties, however, single-age classes have been considered the ideal organization. This was stated explicitly by the governmental committee preparing the 1936 Education Act. With regard to the upper stage of compulsory schooling (the "youth school", grades 7-9), the original plans in the early sixties during the period of experimentation demanded three parallel classes, which means a catchment area of at least 3,500 people. Extensive centralization was carried out as a result, forcing large numbers of rural pupils to undertake daily travelling of considerable length (cf. Solstad 1974, pp.10-12).

The underlying motive in this development has been the generally accepted idea of equality within the educational system. Regardless of such factors as home background and geographical origin, any individual should have the opportunity - by means of public education - to aspire to the more attractive and important positions of our society.

It has also been stressed that the fate of a country like Norway - poor until recently - is particularly dependent on its human resources being bale to compete successfully with other industrialized societies. Public education must reach everyone and thereby ensure that talent is exploited, not wasted in some remote and "unimportant" island or valley community.

In the work of "Samordningsnemnda for skoleverket" (1947) (a governmental committee for coordinating the education system) both the equality argument and the national concern for developing and exploiting the human resources were stated explicitly (Innst. XIV. p.15).

Thus, the standardization of schooling has been considered a necessary part of the struggle for equality of educational opportunity and for developing the nation's pool of human resources. The favourite yardstick for measuring the extent to which these aims have been achieved has been relative access among different groups to the theoretical branch of secondary education, the gymnasium, the type of schooling that also opens the route to education at university level. Thus, the highly standardized gymnasium having a strong academic tradition and rooted in an urban upper class culture, has had a decisive influence, not only on the process of standardization of primary education, but also on the direction of this process. (Cf. Hoigard and Ruge 1971, P.234).

The impact of standardized education on rural communities

Uniformity of educational provision applied to a country in which there are great variations in life style is certain to lead to an education irrelevant and remote from reality for many people. As has been indicated, compulsory education in Norway has developed into a highly urbanized institution. Therefore, the school is particularly out of harmony with those communities that according to tradition, culture, communications and economy are most distant from the urbanized, industrialized and powerful parts of the country, i.e. remote and sparsely populated areas.

Hoem (1976 a and b), in his studies of the functioning of a standard Norwegian education in predominantly Lappish communities of Finnmark, has demonstrated how this education fails to meet local demands. Education therefore undermines rather than supports the upbringing brought about by home and local community, contradictory to the intentions stated by the school legislation. The effectiveness of this type of education seemed slight, judged either by criteria set by the local community or by the society at large. What then is the impact of an education in rural areas differing less from national standards than the Lappish ethnic minority groups? We believe that the educational system in operation today directs young people away from their own communities and this in turn has an adverse effect on these areas.

The school curriculum defines for the children what is important knowledge and what is not. This results in irrelevant learning for those who do not move to more urban areas. - Because of the time and effort put into school life, it also prevents children from experiences that might have been important for a future life in the community. Perhaps even more important, the exclusion of locally relevant problems and knowledge is likely to influence the pupils' attitude and feelings towards their home environment. The pupil is neither qualified nor motivated for the type of opportunities and employment which his own community offers.

Unpublished data from "Grissgrendtprosjektet", a large scale three year follow up study of about 4,000 pupils from 55 youth schools throughout the country may partly substantiate the statement above.

The following general problem regarding the *relevance* of the education given, was presented to 9th grade pupils as part of an extensive group-administered questionnaire:

> "We do not know if the youth school as it is today is equally suitable for all pupils. It is important to know how you, as a pupil, feel about this. It is, of course, difficult to really *know* what school is like for pupils who have a different background from yours and who have different plans for the future. Therefore we only expect you to say something about the group you *think* gains most from attending school, or if you believe that schooling is equally suitable for both groups mentioned."

Table 1. Answer to the question: "For whom is the youth school most suitable?" Percentage distributions by ability level.

	The school is more suitable for:	Ability level Low	 Medium	 High	All pupils
	Pupils living in towns or large villages	15.3	19.5	18.7	18.4
1	Pupils living in small places	11.9	7.9	8.5	9.3
	Equally suitable for both groups	72.8	72.6	72.8	72.3
	Pupils who intend to go on to vocational training	14.8	6.9	4.5	8.1
2.	Pupils who intend to go on to the "gymnasium"	26.5	35.3	45.1	36.0
	Equally suitable for both groups	58.7	57.8	50.4	55.9
	Those who want to be farmers, fishermen, or general workers	9.7	4.8	1.8	4.9
3	Those who want to work in an office	46.2	53.9	61.4	54.6
	Equally suitable for both groups	44.1	41.3	36.8	40.5
	Pupils mainly having theoretical abilities	29.4	47.9	67.8	49.3
4	Pupils mainly having practical abilities	17.8	7.3	3.1	8.6
	Equally suitable for both groups	52.7	44.8	29.1	42.1
	Pupils who want to carry on their education	55.9	62.2	65.6	62.2

(cont'd)

	Ability		level	All
	Low	Medium	High	pupils
5 Pupils who want to start working immediately after leaving school	12.5	5.1	1.7	5.8
Equally suitable for both groups	31.7	32.7	32.7	32.0
Those who want to go on living in rural areas	13.3	5.8	4.0	7.2
6 Those who want to go on living in towns and populous areas or want to move to such places	22.8	20.8	17.9	20.8
Equally suitable for both groups	63.9	73.5	78.1	72.0
Number				
Percent				

The actual questions employed and the distribution of the replies are given in Table 1. The findings strongly support the view that the upper stage of compulsory schooling, is biased towards urban life and predominantly urban occupations. For instance, the children claim three times more often that the school prepares them for an urban life than for a rural one (question 6). When considering the large percentage of pupils opting for the third alternative (equally suitable) on question (1) and (6), it is probably right to point out that it is a strange idea indeed that the only school we have should not be suitable for people living or planning to live in certain types of area. As regards the questions that are more indirectly related to the rural-urban dimension, i.e. questions 2-5, the manifestation of an urban bias is even clearer, particularly for the pupils of higher ability who are the most likely ones to grasp the meaning of the questions and to be aware of the influence of education.

It may also be pointed out that bright, resourceful pupils are likely to be the ones most influenced by this orientation away from their home milieu, even if this cannot be directly implied from Table 1. However, since these children aquire more from the urban biased educational syllabus, experience more success during school life and achieve better relations with their teachers, they will probably also more often internalize the attitudes and values on which education is based, i.e. develop more urban-like attitudes regarding work and spare time activities. Social psychological studies have indicated that among people who enter into a new social setting, for instance a political party, those who experience success within this new frame, are also the ones most likely to internalize the attitudes and values prevailing in this social group (Scott 1959, Hartley 1960).

Furthermore, it is the clever children who most frequently gain access to further and higher education, thus qualifying for occupations not to be found in rural areas. Two Norwegian studies based on army data clearly demonstrate the tendency for well-educated young men from rural areas to move to more urban settlements (Solstad 1968, Ingebrigtsen 1975). Similar findings have also been reported from Sweden by Neymark (1961).

The value-orientation and the natural priorities which have dominated the school system, may be very well illustrated by the following statement made by a former school councillor in a discussion on the Lofoten project:

> "Whenever a 9th grade pupil asked me what to do after completing school - and I didn't know him personally - I went to the pupil files. If it turned out to be a fairly clever pupil obtaining good marks in the main subjects, I advised him to opt for the gymnasium. If he was an average pupil, I suggested that he might go to the vocational school for commerce. If it was a really low-achieving, boy, I might ask whether or not his father had a fishing boat or a farm. If so, I suggested him to join his father in the first place." 1.

The audience, headmasters and municipality school inspectors from the country of Nordland, generally agreed with this description.

The following diagram, Figure 1, summarizes the indications given on how compulsory education promotes rural-urban migration by means of its value orientation as well as its selective function for further education, especially among pupils doing well at school. The school councillor's report cited above underlines how closely these two processes are related; it fits in directly with the right chain of the figure, but it also supports the less easily substantiated belief in the school's predominantly urban-biased value system.

Is this true? Of course no one believes that every clever child accepts the standards set by the educational system, that every resourceful pupil does well at school and that no one receiving a post compulsory theoretical type of education returns to his home village (e.g. teachers). However, even if these effects are limited, they may have a decisive impact on the future of already small and weak communities.

An education that ignores local values and local knowledge, may not only disqualify young people for adult life in typical rural areas.

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1. At a meeting Sept. 1973 arranged by the School Director of Nordland for municipality school inspectors.

It may also create dependency and feelings of inferiority. Education is most likely to have this effect when a national system is imposed on ethnic minority groups, as the previously cited work of Hoem has indicated. However, it is also reasonable to argue that even when the culture gap is less obvious, the school may - among those not belonging to the "dominant" culture - produce attitudes such as "what is considered worthwhile in school, has nothing to do with us", "we can't get important jobs in our village", "it is not nice to talk in the way we do", etc.

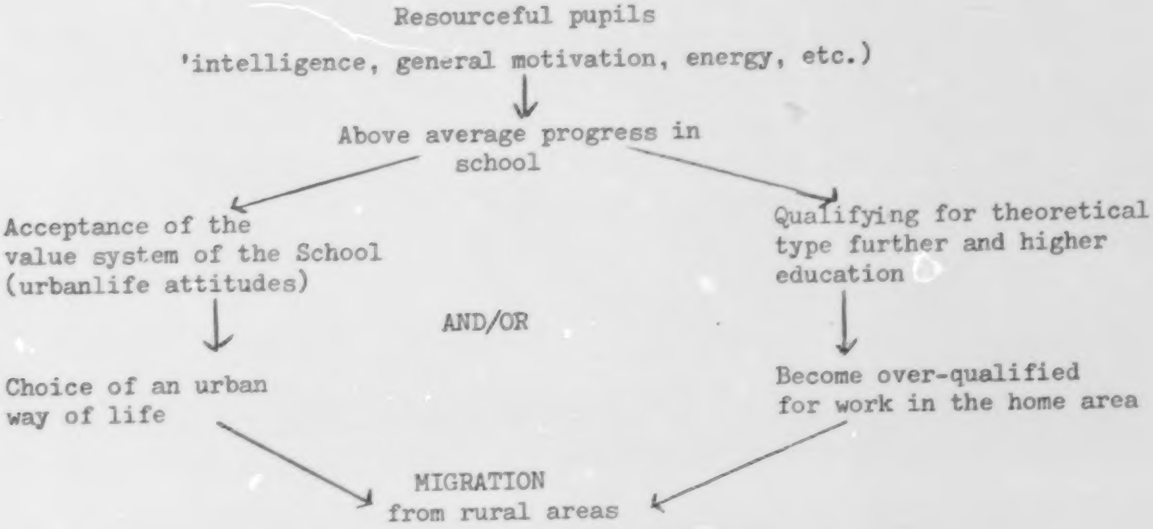
Resourceful pupils
'intelligence, general motivation, energy, etc.)
Above average progress in school
Acceptance of the value system of the School (urbanlife attitudes)
Qualifying for theoretical type further and higher education
AND/OR
Choice of an urban way of life
Become over-qualified for work in the home area
MIGRATION from rural areas

Figure 1. Urbanizing effects of compulsory schooling.

It seems reasonable to conclude that education is not functioning in the interest of small, remote communities in which the primary sector of the economy dominates.

Why strengthen local communities?

Today not only urban but also many rural communities are best characterized by a process of segmentation or detachment. Joint undertakings in work and leisure activities are limited, many of those employed are commuters, the local shop may be closed, radio and TV provide information and entertainment, the telephone service is automated, the school may be centralized to a neighbouring community, and so on. It is to the centralized functions of the welfare state people turn when problems arise, not to their neighbour.

Why then fight for stronger and more integrated local communities? To answer, it is necessary to point out very briefly some likely consequences of weak and disintegrated communities, e.g. forms of economic and social planning which do not stimulate contacts between people living geographically near to each other. In a situation where people do not interact closely with each other, where children in the same street or the same school are exposed to incompatible values, the development of an identity may be at risk. This problem has recently been discussed by Berger et al. (1973), Drawing on sociological, social psychological and philosophical theory and evidence, the authors claim that"...modern man has suffered from a deepening condition of "homelessness"..." (p.75), which manifests itself as a "...permanent identity crisis, a condition conducive to considerable nervousness...and restlessness..." (p.74).

Besides psychological and behavioural consequences for the individual such as lack of identity, a feeling of conflict between incompatible values, and alienation, there are also economic repercussions for society at large. When people do not care for each other or exert informal social control beyond a narrow family sphere, the welfare state has to expand such enterprises as old people's homes, pension systems, nursery schools, the health service, the police force, and so on (cf. Midré 1973).

The consequence of having weak and disintegrated local communities already mentioned are equally valid in the rural and urban situation. For rural communities, especially in peripheral areas, we claim further that such disintegration is disastrous. In spite of the general description given above, small rural communities may offer their members the qualities of an integrated community more often than urban ones. For instance, when many people resist moving from outlying islands with only a bare subsistence economy, it may well be because they experience such qualities of life as solidarity, a feeling of identity and shared values. It is claimed that without relatively strong, integrated local communities in remote rural areas, the maintenance of the population is impossible. Without permanent settlements, important resources at land and sea are spoiled for Norway and for the world at large. We judge this to be an important perspective on rural planning in general, education included. To stop the depopulation of rural areas and to maintain and even increase the production within the primary section of the economy, is also a policy favoured by all the main political parties in Norway.

We have argued that to strengthen local communities is an important aim for local planning, whether in rural or urban areas. Furthermore, in rural areas, especially in remote ones, maintaining a balanced population is dependent on relatively strong, integrated communities. We have also shown that education, due to its content and general frame of reference as well as to the policy of centralization, positively weakens rather than strengthens rural communities. Therefore, in a direct attempt to contribute to an education committed to the interests of the local community, we naturally turned to the rural case. The question remains, however:

Does education really matter?

If we want to enable people to stay in small settlements and in remote areas or to move into such places, at least two conditions have to be met: Firstly, general planning with regard to the economy, labour market, administration, communications, etc. must allow people to make a living. Secondly, people - especially the young ones - must judge the way of life which they can have in remote areas and small settlements to be equally favourable to the more urban way of life that is frequently presented by various mass media. For instance, with reference to spare time activities, the urban situation should not always be put forward as an ideal and a yardstick. You could not possibly have a cinema, a restaurant and a swimming pool in every settlement.

The important thing is, however, not to compare rural and urban life, or life in the political, administrative and cultural centre with life in more peripheral areas. The main aim of the school should be to treat the home environment, the locality and the region as a foundation of common experience from which to expand. This education will not only strive for individual equality, but also for local, regional and subcultural equality. In this context, it is also important that as far as possible every community should have its own school. A school that does not ignore problems that are relevant to the people it serves, that stresses the relations between the local area and units at regional and national level, that shows how the local dialect has its grammatical rules and special concepts, and that its own community has a history and tradition in the same way as any other group of people, may enable its children to develop the feeling of being members of a fully respected community. This is probably in most cases a precondition for developing the amount of self-confidence that is necessary for entering into cooperative work as equal partners or to risk new approaches to problems.

Furthermore, it may be argued that an education based on the local situation will meet the "de-schoolers" criticism of an education that is distant, irrelevant and without connection to the everyday life most of the children know. By considering the maintenance and development of the local community to be of importance, any sharp distinction between school and life is unnatural. Learning in school is no longer just for school. This may eventually have the effect that a clear-cut distinction between schooling and work will gradually vanish for pupils at the higher grades, and that ordinary people may be a kind of part-time teacher (if it were not for the teachers' union).

The sceptic may question whether or not this education is going to produce young people with a very narrow outlook, perhaps even cultivating chauvinism? There seems to be no reason why it should. To focus on and to take local matters as the point of departure is far from ignoring more general topics. The individual community is of importance for, and not the least dependent on, the outside world. It cannot be understood except in the context of the region it is part of, and so on up to the global level. In an education adjusted to the local situation, information and problems at national and global level are also necessary parts of the curriculum. It should also be pointed out that to study the social units which constitute the local community, the shared as well as the conflicting interests between such units, and the processes which create and change the local "reality", may be the best possible gateway to the study of social science in general. Everyday local knowledge or data which the pupils collect for specific purposes, may be important empirical evidence in an education for understanding such aspects of modern society as democracy, bureaucracy, peace and conflict, social stratification and centralization/decentralization.

Perhaps a more serious question is this: Does education really matter? Is it not events outside the educational system, that decide the fate of a local community or of sparsely populated areas in general? The influence of economic policy and of mechanization in the primary sector of the economy is well substantiated. This objection has, however, another facet. What impact does education have on the development of urban like preferences regarding occupations and spare time activities among young people? Perhaps newspapers, the sensational weeklies, radio and TV are more responsible for such trends? It is certainly impossible to give any firm answer to the question of which factor is more powerful, education or the mass media. We think that education does matter, and that a school which is working closely in accordance with the local community is in a better position to fulfil its task, either judged from an individual, local, regional, national or global point of view. This school may stimulate and reinforce the factors that might strengthen the local community and may actively counteract the destructive tendencies.

The following sections will describe how, in the Lofoten project, we have tried to approach this ideal of a school that not only serves some of the intellectually bright individuals and in some way the society at large, but also encourages in all children a feeling of commitment to the local community, of which the school is - or ought to be - part. Firstly, the initial decisions concerning school level, region, and number of schools to be included in the project, are outlined. The second part is a more analytical presentation of the development of teaching materials and of the experiences gained in teaching local knowledge.

AN OUTLINE OF THE PROJECT - INITIAL DECISIONS

School level

During 1969-72 one of the authors (Solstad) took part in an extensive research programme on the functioning of the recently implemented 7-9 grade comprehensive school or youth school in areas of scattered population. The research work was initiated by Forsoksradet (The National Council for Innovation in Education) in response to heavy criticism of the policy of centralization. The investigations carried out, mainly of the survey type, covered such aspects as recruitment of teachers, educational achievement in large and small schools, effects of school transportation, and school-home relations. A follow-up data collection included pupils from 55 schools throughout the country. The author visited most of these schools and all of those from northern Norway. It became increasingly clear from numerous discussions with teachers and school authorities that the problem of education in predominantly non-industrialized areas far from the urban centres was not merely the result of heavy centralization and high turnover of staff. In many places, the main problem was felt to be that education was detached from the community it served, both regarding the syllabus and the timing of the school terms. This complaint was most frequently met in the fishing districts of northern Norway. The evidence claimed for this view was low school attendance and low motivation for school work, especially during the main fishing season.

Such problems do not seem to be equally important at the lower stage of compulsory schooling. At this stage, the generally accepted task of mastering the three R's plays an important part of the curriculum, and schooling does not interfere with what has traditionally been thought of as the age of work. A project designed to tailor education to local needs seemed to be most urgent at the upper stage of compulsory schooling (the youth school).

Region

One of the most important seasonal fisheries in Norway is the Lofoten cod fishery. This normally starts in January when the north Atlantic cod approaches Lofoten to spawn, and lasts for about three months. Despite some annual variations in the time of the cod's arrival and the amount of fish available, the regularity throughout the centuries is a most striking feature of this fishery. Because of its predictability and the amount of catch, the seasonal cod fishery is a very important factor in the economy of the area and it has had a decisive influence on the type of settlements and communities developed. During the season, a large number of fishermen and fish workers from other parts of the Norwegian coast, especially from elsewhere in northern Norway, gather in Lofoten so that some of the typical fishing villages ("vær") may have its adult population doubled or tripled. Even taking into consideration that there is good farming in some areas of Lofoten and that the tertiary sector of the economy is important in centres of population such as Kabelvag/Svolvær and Leknes, it is fair to say that the prosperity of the region is heavily dependent on the winter cod fishery.

Traditionally, any human resources available during the season were in some way involved in activities related to the fishery. This also applied to youngsters who had just left compulsory school at the age of fourteen and in some cases even to school children as well. In some of the Lofoten municipalities, the continuation school - before the 1960 Education Act a post-elementary one year of schooling - was organized in two separate courses; a theoretical course during the autumn term and a period devoted to practical work from April until June. The spell between was free to allow the youngsters to work during the cod season. Prior to the 1936 Education Act, special arrangements also applied in some areas of Lofoten to allow pupils in the upper class of the elementary school to take part in various activities during the winter fishery.

By the introduction of another two years of compulsory schooling during the sixties (required by law in 1969), many people in Lofoten felt that education interfered negatively with the interests of the local economy and the local community as a whole. Important human resources were not available at the time they were needed most, and the youngsters - especially those who were most likely to go on to further schooling - were prevented from acquiring first-hand knowledge of the economic activity on which the whole community was based.

Such considerations explain why one of the Lofoten youth schools (Værøy) applied to the municipality school council in 1971 to be allowed to change the time schedule so that the pupils from grades 7-9 could take part in work related to the cod fishery during the height of the season. This application for a reorganization of the school year received some public attention and was followed by a discussion in the local newspaper early in 1972. When one of the authors (Solstad) visited this school in April 1972 (cf. previous paragraph) some kind of research involvement was also discussed with the headmaster.

In conclusion, when the first plans for a project with the aim of adjusting education to the local situation vaguely emerged during 1972-73, the region of Lofoten appeared to be a good choice. As has been pointed out above, the conflict between an important aspect of the local/regional economy and a recently expanded compulsory education seemed to be more apparent than in most other areas in Norway. This choice was also facilitated by the fact that the two early planners (Solstad and Solberg) both had first hand knowledge of the region, including a number of personal contacts.

Participating schools

During Spring 1973 the youth schools and the municipality school councils in the Lofoten region were visited to find out whether the schools actually wanted to and were allowed to take part in an innovation project, and also to discuss - in general terms - the types of possible action. At this stage the School Director of the county of Nordland had already been informed, and had also approved of the general idea proposed.

It was considered important to include schools of various size, from different types of settlement, with varying degrees of centralization, and also to include a sufficient number of schools to allow for variation in school leadership and teacher coverage. For instance, there were substantial differences between schools within the area regarding turn-over rate and degree of local recruitment of teachers.

The most unanimous acceptance of the idea of some kind of new approaches to counteract the disfunction of standardized schooling was found in the municipalities of Rost, Vaeroy and Moskenes (& Flakstad), the communities most highly dependent on fishing. However, the preliminary choice of schools included, in addition to the four existing youth schools in these municipalities, one school in Vestvagoy and two in Vagan (see map).

In a meeting with representatives from all these seven schools in Bodo (Sept. 1973) their participation was confirmed, but as will be shown, participation turned out to be everything from passive acceptance of some proposals to active engagement in developmental work. In the first place, degree of participation was related to the two types of actions proposed.

Approaches to the problem

The project was approved by school authorities at regional and national level on the condition that any action had to be carried out within the general frames set by the 1960 Education Act and the prevailing curriculum plan ("Monsterplanen"). The latter, however, did state explicitly that:

> "Education ought to keep in touch with the local community, The pupils should be given the opportunity to learn by means of information and from their own experiences how the community functions and how it is governed."
> (Monsterplanen 1971, p.22)

Regarding the teaching of individual subjects, the plan underlines that:

> "... on many occasions the local environment favours one syllabus rather than another"
> (Ibid. P.25)

It is fair to say that "Monsterplanen" more than the earlier curriculum plans is open to local variation in education. This fact was an important precondition for the project in which the following two general approaches were proposed in order to develop a more locally relevant education:

1. All the pupils should be allowed to take part in the economic activity on which the community is founded, i.e. the seasonal cod fishery.
2. Local and regional matters should be made a more important part of the curriculum for all pupils.

The proposals put forward by the research group and agreed upon by the schools involved were of this general character. The details of the subsequent approaches were worked out in cooperation with the teachers concerned (cf. below). A description and an analysis of the latter line of action, the development of teaching materials and the actual teaching based on local knowledge, is given below.

ANALYTICAL ASPECTS

Until recently the system approach has dominated the sociologists' concern with educational problems (see Young 1971, Bernbaum 1976). As a result, to improve education has been seen mainly as a matter of finding the right organizational structure. By focusing their research on such problems, sociologists have taken the question of educational knowledge for granted (see Seeley 1966). Our point of view is that the structural aspects of the educational system may at best partly reflect the way in which the curriculum is defined and organized. Consequently, the problem of designing a relevant education is primarily a matter of curriculum. This has been the starting point of our work in the region of Lofoten.

Local knowledge: A social construction of the local reality

Anybody of knowledge must be considered as a social construction of the reality with which it is concerned. In order to act adequately man has to observe and interpret the environment within which he is acting. Thus the social world as such can never be grasped immediately, but has to be mentally constructed, Through these constructions we are able to perceive our environment and communicate with people within it. This is the crucial idea in Berger & Luckmann's (1966) three statements:

> Society is a human product.
> Society is an objective reality.
> Man is a social product. (p.79)

This means that although society is a result of people's action, it presents itself as a more or less ready-made material structure within which man has to navigate. How this structure is perceived, is the starting point of sociology of knowledge. Knowledge guides our actions, and as such has to consist of statements, implicit or explicit, about ourselves and about our environment. Elaborating this further, we may say that local knowledge is:

> "the explanations of self, man and environment (ecological/material, social, and cultural) which people in a local community transmit to each other through discourse and ritual."
>
> (Barth 1975, P.15)

But as 'constructors' of local educational knowledge we would transfer the word 'local' and also include a definition as explanation of local relationships that are not transmitted between people, but might be or ought to be transmitted between people in the local community. In other words, we are not only concerned with what passes for knowledge in the local community. What might or ought to pass for knowledge is as important, such as topics concerning the ecology of the region, its economical setting and social network, aspects of local identity such as history, folklore and dialect. Briefly, local educational knowledge will refer to questions having to do with maintenance and change of the local opportunity situation.

Local and regional communities may be regarded as social systems or social fields (Gronhaug 1975, Thuen & Wadel 1976), whose pattern is a consequence of actors (single persons or corporate groups) making choices and pursuing goals under given assets and restrictions. In other words, statistical regularities of patterns of behaviour of a population or a social unit may be expected to result from actors' choices in constrained situations (Barth 1966). Social or cultural patterns may thus be related to three main types of variables:

(a) People's values, interests or goals

(b) People's understanding, their ability to interpret their situation and predict the outcome of alternative actions.

(c) Situational variables:

    (i) Ecological/material assets and restrictions

    (ii) Interactive or strategical assets and restrictions of actors; for instance, defined by formal or informal regulations.

(Brox 1970)

Given certain goals, (b) and (c) may be said to constitute a person's opportunity situation, the world (internal and external) in which he is to act and to which he has to adapt.

Developing local educational knowledge can then be seen as creating a curriculum which explains how local social and cultural patterns are generated, i.e. explaining local values and the local opportunity situation of people, This is a brief statement of the general purpose of our work.

It may be argued that the local community is one thing, while society as a whole is something else. However, people never meet the "pure" and "general" society, they always meet it through a local setting or a local community. An understanding of society and culture as well must necessarily include the local aspect. Therefore, as has been pointed out (p. 10 above), teaching local knowledge is nothing but a necessary part of teaching social science in general.

Planning social or educational change: Generative planning

This model for understanding how social processes and hence social systems are generated, may in a given empirical situation be used to plan social change. If we understand how social processes are maintained, we have a starting point for changing them. This idea has been used by Brox in formulating his theory of generative planning (Brox 1972). Brox considers this planning model as an alternative to the technological planning model which he calls pattern planning. Principally the latter is a means - end model where one is seeking a way to get from the present pattern (M_1) to a future patterns (M_2) :

$$M_1 \rightarrow M_2$$

In generative planning one starts with an understanding of what is creating the situation M_1. This means that one must be able to identify the significant units whose actions are creating the results we may observe as M_1, and isolate the parameters which give direction to and influence the decisions concerned. A change in this pattern, for instance in the direction of M_2, can be explained or carried out by changing the situation in which these units are acting. Then the pattern, M_2, can be generated.

Thus, the aim of generative planning is to offer allocations and create organizations (of a multipurposive character) which enable people to maximize their own values. The implementation of this theoretical standpoint has meant that the research group has defined itself as an actor or better as an entrepreneur (see Barth 1972). Thus generative planning in practice means participant planning (Kamfjord 1974).

In our case the basic question was: which variables, factors or parameters are creating the present educational pattern? When the school authorities, parents and teachers concerned had agreed, within the limits set by governmental regulations, to include local knowledge in the educational menu, a number of further questions required attention. These may be listed as follows:

Which topics should such an education cover?
How should this teaching be carried out?
What kind of material structure had it to be based on?
What kind of material change had to be made?
How could existing structures be used in new ways?

What kind of organizational change had to be made, for instance, in the school day and the teachers' planning procedure?

In addition, what role was the research group to be given in the subsequent work?

How these questions were worked on and how the particular innovation was carried out will be accounted for below.

EXPERIENCES AND RESULTS

The introductory phase: The role of the research group

When negotiations began with the schools about their participation in an innovation programme, questions concerning leadership, strategy or 'profit' were often asked in one way or another:

Who is going to plan for whom?

Who is going to profit from this work, the community, the school, the teachers or the social scientists?

Is it going to be some kind of a programmed experiment, or are the teachers allowed to take part in developing the curriculum?

Such questions were asked both directly and indirectly by teachers, thus indicating a need to clarify the role of the researchers and for some form of contract between the schools and the research group. The resolution of these issues will be described in the next section.

Stages in the developmental work

From the beginning, it was obvious that the communities of the region shared many common features, such as ecology, history, labour market and culture. Consequently, there were good reasons for making educational materials similar for all the schools in the region. This implied that it was necessary to build up planning groups both within the teaching staffs of the respective schools and between the participating schools.

Fig. 2 shows a plan of the network that was established during the innovation process.

1) Negotiations with the teachers and parents of the selected schools took place in the autumn of 1973. During these negotiations it was made clear that a meeting was to be arranged where representatives from the respective schools could gather and plan the first step of the programme. The teaching staff at each school elected a representative who, to a certain extent, was to be in charge of the innovation at that school.

"Outsiders"	Working groups between schools	Working groups within each school	Administrative changes
The research board		1. Negotiations with the schools	9. The establishing of local administration and control functions
The University	2. Introductory working seminar A'73	8. Planning groups at the schools	
The research group	3. Working seminar for preparing the anthology A '73, S '74		Local administrations, local authorities
The authors of the anthology	4. Evaluation and planning seminar (Gravdal I S '74)		Locally administrated inservice training for teachers
	5. Evaluation and planning seminar (Gravdal II S '75)		
	6. The Handbook committee A '75, S '76		
	7. Evaluation and planning seminar (Svolvær S '76)		

Fig 2. Network established during the innovation period. (A = autumn, S = spring)

2) The first meeting with the headmasters concerned and the elected teachers was held in the autumn of 1973. At this meeting the roles of the research group and the schools in the project were discussed. As in the meetings already mentioned, questions arose concerning leadership, strategies and profit.

The negotiations resulted in the following agreement between the schools and the research group. First, there had to be a reciprocity as to the profits. The main goal was to make a curriculum useful for the schools. Second, as a result, the enterprise was defined as a cooperative project where the schools and the research group together planned and carried out the different parts of the programme.

By these formulations the role of the research group was principally settled. Of course, our status as researchers legitimated our presence, but we also had to participate in all aspects concerned. One might say that the group was primarily defined as a participant and secondarily as a 'research' group.

3) Introductory working seminars at the respective schools and between the schools were arranged. These seminars focused on two main problems, namely (1) developing a regional educational syllabus, and (2) identifying educational topics from the respective local communities.

It was decided that a textbook on regional topics had to be written. This decision was followed by a preliminary plan concerning topics to be covered. Some twenty people, either living in the region, or by origin or work closely related to the region, were asked to write on the various topics according to their specialities. About two months later the first version of the textbook was available. From that point the schools started using the new syllabus.

4) When the schools had been using the textbooks for 6 months, an evaluation seminar was arranged (Gravdal I, Spring '74). Teachers from the schools, the authors of the textbooks and the research group participated in this seminar. Based on field work, consisting of meetings, talks with the teachers, interviews and a questionnaire, the research group presented a summary of the teachers' experiences with the preliminary version of the regional textbook, its geographical and thematic representativeness and its usefulness in teaching. The discussions which followed resulted in agreement on a detailed outline of a (more) permanent version including principles for modifying the already existing articles, plans for new topics, and proposals for illustrations and format.

Thus, this seminar guided the work of completing the textbook, in the first place by working out a supplementary volume. The regionally based series of textbooks has now been completed, and consists of four volumes covering the following topics:

Volume I: Science subjects

1. Land and sea
2. Weather and climate
3. Plants and animals in the sea
4. Plants in the tidal area
5. Animals in the tidal area
6. Plants and animals on land

Volume II: History

1. The early history
2. Fisheries and sea hunting
3. The Bergen merchant, the 'Vaereier' ('owner' of the fishing village) and the fisherman

Volume III: Economy

1. The region of Lofoten: Population, economy and communication
2. Agriculture and combination economy
3. The fish from the sea to the table. About the fish processing technology
4. Important issues in the fisheries
5. The fisheries and the future
6. The Rost Innovation Company

Volume IV: Culture

1. Local customs
2. The dialect of the Lofot region
3. Humour
4. Lofoten in Norwegian literature
5. Lofoten in pictorial art
6. Songs and musical traditions of the region - past and present

Even if the various topics are based on the Lofot region, much of the content is so general that the books may also be used in other areas of the country. The books have also been used successfully at a number of higher secondary schools.

5) Evaluation of the teaching aspect used in the project was carried out. After having used all the topics in teaching, a new working seminar on teaching local and regional topics was arranged, consisting of teachers from all the schools. Results from our field work were presented as an introduction to the subject. The discussion that followed resulted in a decision that some kind of teachers' handbook had to be made which could link the educational content with the most appropriate teaching methods.

6) A committee, consisting of three teachers and the research group, was later assigned to this project. A preliminary version of the book has been finished, and has been used for some time by the schools.

The book first outlines the ideas on which the innovation was based, as well as the experiences gained in the developmental work. The main part consists of proposals for topic projects and teaching methods. A number of AV-series have been produced by several teachers and a survey of these and other available materials relevant to local teaching have been presented.

7) In the spring of 1976 a new working seminar was arranged, in which the teachers were expected to contribute to the evaluation of both the teachers' handbook and the innovation programme as a whole. The meeting decided that the new materials had to be tried out for one more year before any further changes could be made.

8) During the whole innovation period we have tried to establish a permanent planning group at each participating school. When this work

began, the head of each group was paid from our research grant. The task is now regarded as part of the teacher's normal duties, and his teaching load has been reduced accordingly.

To the extent that we have managed to establish effective local planning groups, the innovation at the school concerned has seemed to be successful. The study of this problem has not been completed, and will be accounted for in another context.

At most of the participating schools the teaching staff has a fairly rapid turn over. At one of the schools about 50-70 per cent of the personnel leave each year. This has created great problems with regard to the developmental work carried out.

9) Locally administered courses have, as a consequence, become another feature of the innovation. In the introduction stage these courses were arranged by the research group, but in future this responsibility will have to be taken over by the local administration. In one of the municipalities the local board of education has hired teachers for this job, who have specific qualifications and experience in this field. But in general this is a necessary part of our work which we have not solved in a satisfactory way.

The teaching materials produced - a summary

The emerging pattern of the innovation has been described. By the word 'emerging' we want to emphasize that the pattern has not been planned on beforehand, but has been a result of the situational definitions made, the subsequent decisions taken, and the experiences gained during the developmental process.

A major part of our work has been to build up a body of teaching materials to facilitate the teaching of local knowledge including:

1) four textbooks on topics such as science, history, economy and culture,
2) the preliminary teachers' manual,
3) seven slide series on various regionally relevant topics,
4) tape recordings of radio programmes on Lofoten broadcast by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation from 1950 onwards.

Apart from possible changes in the different parts of the teaching materials (especially item (2) above), the curricular aspect of the project is considered as completed.

Teaching local knowledge

In accordance with the general research approach the encounter model (see Eisner 1967 and 1969, Kliebard 1970) has been chosen as the frame of reference for the planning of the teaching. In fact, this model may be considered as a kind of generative planning model (Hogmo & Solstad 1975). The planning of the teaching is a question of planning an encounter within which the teacher and the student together participate in steering the learning process. In this context the aim of the work of the research group has not been to produce a fixed teaching syllabus on local knowledge, but to give resources to the schools which would enable them to plan their own teaching.

What kind of teaching did the teachers plan?

Tom Tiller has, within this project, written a thesis on "Working with Local Content in the Upper Stage of the Compulsory School". As a part of his data collection the teachers were asked about the desirability of developing more detailed courses within the project. Most of the answers he got were negative and the following reply is characteristic:

> "It will not be possible to completely plan the teaching in advance. A teacher may make a detailed plan of his teaching beforehand, but one must not expect that his program will be followed in any detail. Instead one must be prepared to change it during the lesson. The teaching plan must always be open, especially when one is dealing with content of which the students have some knowledge."
> (Tiller 1976, p.24)

In summarizing the results of this questioning, Tiller says:

> "Having made several visits to the schools, one developed the impression that it was neither possible nor desirable to programme teaching on local topics in advance."
> (Ibid., P.24)

It might be said that within this project the teachers imagined that the teaching situation had to be based on new 'rules' for defining knowledge, and new 'rules' for performing the teacher and student role. In analytical terms it can be said that the teachers indicated that local knowledge had to be taught by means of codes different from those applied to ordinary school knowledge. The students should have the opportunity to benefit from their local statuses to discover or create knowledge about the local community. This definition of the educational situation would imply that in many of the topics concerned, the students would have as good or an even better grasp of the situation than their teachers. Such circumstances would again have consequences for defining the teacher-student role set. These questions indicate that teaching local knowledge has to be carried out through more student centred methods. An account of Tiller's more specific findings is given below.

Environmental restrictions in working with local content

Tiller's study on the teachers' experiences of planning and carrying out their teaching has shown that even if the teachers planned more student-centred teaching methods in connection with local content, it was difficult to execute these intentions. Here the problems will be described from a phenomenological point of view in order to demonstrate the problem of (a) switching from an antecedent knowledge to a new one and (b) establishing a new body of knowledge or a 'culture' within a social system corresponding to another one.

"We have the ghost of a compulsory curriculum hanging over us"

Despite the fact that the new curriculum plan is no compulsory teaching plan in the traditional sense, many teachers felt that they were bound by that concept. Consequently, they found themselves facing the dilemma of deciding whether to direct their effort towards local knowledge or to give the students a 'safe' education through the school's ordinary curriculum. Tiller gives an excerpt from his talk with a teacher who tried to explain one side of the dilemma, but was in the first place unable to express himself adequately. Tiller says:

> "Two days after my visit I got a postcard from the same teacher who had written: Now I have found the right phrase for what I wanted to express: It is not the compulsory curriculum, but the ghost of a compulsory curriculum that is the biggest problem."
> (Ibid., p.139)

Many teachers reported that both the students and the teachers expected the school to transmit a compulsory curriculum. One teacher said:

> "...many parents expect us to go through a compulsory curriculum. If we deviate from the traditional, we immediately get adverse reactions both from the students themselves and from the parents."
> (Ibid., p.139)

Thus, even if the teachers found it important to build up their teaching on local knowledge, to carry it out made them feel guilty.

When the teachers tried to change their teaching methods, many of them found it difficult for reasons which can be explained in terms of the school as a social system.

"My timetable is a great nuisance"

Owing to the fact that the curriculum is subject-oriented, the teachers' timetables at most schools, especially in the upper stage of compulsory schooling, are arranged in a subject teacher system. Teaching local knowledge will often imply a categorization running across the traditional subjects. Thus, teaching local curriculum in a subject teacher system is difficult, a fact the teachers experienced, as cited above.

At smaller schools where to a higher degree a class teacher system was operating (one teacher had the class for most of the subjects), reorganizing the syllabus was easier. The students could then stay on a task over a longer period and did not have to break every 3/4 of an hour. At one of these schools they had changed from planning a yearly timetable to planning for shorter periods (one month or two months). If a subject or a group of subjects was given too much emphasis during one period, this could be compensated for in the next period. At this school the headmaster insisted that the teachers had to take part in planning the timetable.

"A rigid budget made it difficult to work with local content"

At most of the schools the annual budget did not allow for 'unpredictable' expenses during the year, such as arranging short excursions or buying unforeseen teaching materials. The schools found the need to have a more flexible budget or to devise other ways of meeting expenditure resulting from the progressive curriculum planning.

In many cases the research group had to contribute 'research money' to solve acute problems of carrying out certain plans. The local school authorities have now become aware of this problem and have suggested solutions.

"What kind of person is a subject-centred system creating?"

The teachers have been aware that a given syllabus and school system creates roles that are maintained by the system. These roles will then serve as a restriction on any attempt to change aspects of the system.

In a school where the timetable has been given to the teachers at the start of a year, and the teachers have planned their lessons individually, it may be difficult to switch to other working routines.

Many of the teachers have emphasized that teaching local knowledge implies that the teachers cooperate in building up a library of literature and other teaching materials, and in planning and carrying out the teaching.

One teacher made the following comment on the situation:

> "As you understand it is not difficult for me as a teacher to produce a good excuse not to cooperate. And in fact we may have such good excuses. However, we must not be blind to the fact that the teachers themselves can solve these problems if they want to. But maybe we do not want to solve them, and that is the greatest problem. We do not want it because we do not know the outcome."
> (Ibid.pp.150-151)

Several teachers reported that it was difficult to use student-centred teaching methods because the students simply did not cope with them. One teacher put it this way:

> "My class has been badly trained in alternative working methods from the primary level. If one is going to do anything at the secondary level, one has to start training independent working methods in the seventh grade. I have not had the opportunity to do that."
> (Ibid. p.153)

In the teachers' opinion the students seemed to be shaped into a passive role that many teachers found difficult to change. The teachers who had tried to change their working method, but had not succeeded, turned back to the easier alternative. One teacher expressed it like this:

> "If you know that the students do not accept a method of working, you simply plan another one."
> (Ibid., p.155)

Teh teachers' critical comments on their own role performance and their reports of the students' difficulties in changing to student centred working methods, seem to indicate that the traditional teacher-student role set was experienced as a barrier in working with local topics.

A case study of one school

As has been shown, the Tiller study clearly indicates the problems involved when new knowledge categories are taught within an already existing school system (read: social and material system) which corresponds to the traditional learning categories (subjects). This relationship between knowledge categories and school system was also understood by several participating teachers. At one of the schools a group of teachers had some interesting ideas both as to relevant content and organization of teaching. In this context the school as a whole may be looked upon as an educational enterprise, as can the work that has taken place in the various classes.

The teachers at this school have found that teaching local knowledge can best be organized through a larger project. This has meant that each class, or a smaller group within the class, has worked on a topic from the local community, the municipality or the region of Lofoten. The project was organised in such a way that the various classes collected information about the region in general all through the year, at the same time they prepared themselves to work on a specific topic concerning the local community. The latter sub-projects culminated in a week in the middle of the winter where the normal school work was abandoned and the various student groups concentrated on preparing a presentation of their work.

Each group presented their work by making a frieze where illustrations and written materials were displayed. The whole exhibition was arranged in the school hall, and on the last evening of the week members of the local community were invited to look at the work done at the school. A local pictorial artist was also invited to give an exhibition of his work. Different kinds of entertainment (music and sketches) by 'actors' from the school or from the local community, were also provided. This annual open night is becoming a tradition at the school, and the presentations have been met with great interest by the local people, a situation that is encouraging both for the pupils and the teachers.

A description of the projects the students have been working on during the previous year, is set out below.

Three old farms (neighbouring farms). This is the story of three old farms on the outskirts of the local community and how they were the starting point for the three neighbourhoods now in existence. The students and the teacher visited these neighbourhoods several times, interviewed and talked with people, took pictures, and then presented their work consisting of written compositions, maps and a series of slides.

The wild life of Lofoten The students had drawn the various animals and birds found in Lofoten. They had also taken impressions of different animal tracks found locally. Besides, they had written descriptions of the animals and their habitats.

The local church. One group of students defined church architecture as their object of study. They gathered written material about the church, talked with the clergyman and the parish clerk, and wrote a composition about it. They also took several pictures both from outside and inside and presented a series of slides.

A display of old pictures. The previous year a group of students had collected old pictures from the community. This year a group of students arranged an exhibition and made notes on the various pictures.

A small fishing village. A small fishing village was about to be sold to a person who was supposed to restore it as a tourist centre. A group of pupils visited this village, took pictures of it, and interviewed people about their way of life. Later they made a series of slides and wrote a number of small reports on their visit.

The "Lofoten wall". A class made a large map of the Lofoten region. The different fishing villages in the region were marked and a picture from each of them was put on the map. The class gave a description of the regional eceonomy with particular reference to the fisheries. They presented texts, tables and diagrams of the changes in the Lofoten cod fisheries, including the amount of fish caught, types of equipment, the number of people participating, etc.

Making a curtain. By applying a special technique one group of students made a woollen curtain consisting of motifs from the region.

Making a fishing cottage (rorbu). A miniature fishing cottage with drawings and diagrams of its use was made as a part of one group's contribution.
The same group did a project on the Arctic cod. A map was drawn of fishing areas and the global wanderings of the cod. There was also an article on the location of spawning and its dependence on the hydrographic situation. This group had been taken to sea on a research ship and had been allowed to do some simple observations on the topic.
The same pupils made splices and different kinds of rope knots as another part of their contribution.

All these projects are good examples of integrated group activities.

The projects were structured to a considerable extent by the teachers. But the different facets of the projects and the progression of the work were decided by the students to a large extent.

The projects were also designed so that they consisted of different activities matching the abilities and interests of the various pupils. Thus students with different abilities and interests could work together as a team.

The teachers at this school plan to develop this way of working. At present an integrated school project is being planned where the different classes will cooperate in one school project.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the Lofoten Project has been to achieve an education relevant to the local community. Educationally, this approach to schooling may be equally strongly defended whether it refers to urban or rural settings (cf. Midwinter 1973). The choice of a rural region partly reflects the judgement that traditional education in particular has been removed from the rural situation, and partly the belief that economically weak communities need any support that might contirbute to the maintenance of social and cultural integration.

The work carried out in order to develop an education relevant to the local and regional situation may methodologically be described as generative or participant planning. In practice, this means that the research group in cooperation with teachers and local school authorities has been planning a teaching based on local knowledge.

The traditional school has to a great extent been characterized by a curriculum which has not involved the students' local reality. School knowledge has been organized in fields or subjects (mathematics, language, history, etc.). This has resulted in a material structure (time table, teaching materials, budget, etc.) which generates a teaching pattern where the students are treated as ignorant and the teachers as knowledge holders. Literally, the teachers have been teaching and the students have been learning.

The introduction of local knowledge implies the use of local categories as the starting point for the teaching. This means new rules for what is relevant knowledge (the question of framing) as well as new rules for classifying school knowledge (Bernstein 1975, p.85). It is, in other words, a question of changing the teaching code. When the school is concerned with discovering and understanding relationships within the local community and between this community and the outer world, the students are defined as knowledge holders. This in turn means a change both in the role of student and teacher as has been demonstrated within our work.

The introduction of local knowledge as part of teaching within a traditional, subject-centred school will imply at least two types of knowledge codes. This is likely to produce a conflict situation for the teachers, the students and the parents. Thus, teaching local knowledge within a traditional school will be experienced as problematic both because it means code switching and a form of teaching carried out within a social and material structure corresponding to other teaching codes.

Tiller's study has demonstrated how this problem has been experienced by the teachers. When they have tried to alter their teaching methods, the various aspects of the school structure have represented great obstacles.

When the teachers,despite this fact, try to carry out the local teaching in a traditional school, they principally have the choice between two alternatives:

(a) The local knowledge may be taught through traditional teaching codes. This will in fact mean that local knowledge has to be translated into normal school knowledge.

(b) In teaching local knowledge one has to change the teaching code. This means that the organization of the teaching has to correspond to the problem one is working with.

An example of the latter choice is found in the case study presented above. The teachers here concluded that they had to 'stop' the normal school during the work on the projects. The subjects and the timetable were then put aside, and the work within the project was organized (division of labour, schedule etc.) in a way appropriate with the defined task (see Herbst 1971).

Using local categories as the starting point of the teaching may be considered as a way of designing an education where the students not only learn for life, but also learn from life. It is, as we see it, the only way of making a relevant education. This means creating a situation where the students are given the opportunity to thematize their situation within the society. This defines social science as the most important subject within the school, and such a definition must not be narrow but must carry a broad and complete meaning.

The goal of any innovation is institutionalization. To understand social change, the attention has to be passed from the innovation to the institutionalization which is the crucial phase in any question of social change. Only the ideas that represent accomplishable allocations in a specific situation will be adopted (see Barth 1971, p.104) In analysing this question in the Lofoten project an interesting comparison can be made between the various participating schools. However, this is a part of our study which has not been completed. One crucial question in this context seems to be closely related to the fact that the school is not an open, but a closed social system where the students' attendance is compulsory. The children cannot choose whether they want to go there or not. The curriculum has to a great extent also been compulsory. When one introduces new curricular activities which have not the same status, their implementation will be dependent on entrepreneurs. This fact was stated succintly by one school: "We have not succeeded very much in our work within the frame of the project because we have lacked the moving spirit."

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